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EDWARD EVERETT AND AMERICAN NATIONALISM

by

STUART HORN

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1972

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PREFACE

In 1962 David Potter writing for the American Historical Review set forth a series of questions which historians of American nationalism had either failed to resolve or had overlooked. Uppermost in his mind was the problem of the apparent dual loyalty which was especially evident in the period before the Civil War. The primary purpose of this dissertation, therefore, was to investigate the development of nationalism in its relation to the earlier regionalism.

Edward Everett's life was particularly fruitful for this endeavor. Born in the age of Federalist ascendency, experiencing youth during the nation's second struggle with Great Britain, he emerged onto the stage of public life at the moment when America's nationalism was in its nascent stage. For the remainder of his life he was intimately connected with the history of the nation and most especially with the evolution and propagation of its nationalist symbology.

Everett was not a man of few words. If one problem emerged it was the voluminous collection of papers which this historically minded scholar and politician gathered as his testament. Thus it was apparent that much of his life would have to be bypassed at this stage if the

central question was to remain clear. There was no attempt, therefore, to write a biography of Edward Everett. When it was obvious that certain strands in his life were related to factors other than his nationalism these were not dealt with. This was particularly true of his career as governor of Massachusetts. No attempt was made here, for example, to retell the complete story of these years.

This study primarily focuses on the central problem raised by Potter. Everett eventually came to speak for a large segment of the Brahmin conservative elite. His close connection with Massachusetts cultural and political life makes him an important figure for the study of American nationalism.

Throughout this study the definition of nationalism as expressed by Hans Kohn has been adopted. Nationalism is primarily a psychological affinity directed toward the larger collective --the nation. Thus to get at the root of nationalism the focus must be on the psyche of the individual who has attached his personal destiny to that of the political collective. Furthermore, any definition of the nation expressed by the individual is directly related to the individual's level of consciousness.

CHAPTER I

AN EDUCATION IN LIFE

With the arrival in America of the English adventurer, Richard Everett, in the year 1636, the Everett family was established in the new world. In the small settlement of Dedham, Massachusetts, Richard Everett and his wife, Mary Winch, initiated a pattern of life emulated for five generations.[1] For the next one hundred and fifty years the Everetts occupied public positions within the Massachusetts community. As selectmen, surveyors, officers in the colonial militia, and deacons, they contributed to the New England way.[2] In later years,

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[1]Edward Everett, "Autobiography" (1850), Edward Everett Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, p. 2 (hereafter cited as EEP); Edward Everett to Mrs. Davenport, 31 December 1845, EEP, 77; William Everett, The Descendants of Edward Everett (Boston, 1902), pp. 9-19; Frank Smith, A History of Dedham, Massachusetts (Dedham, Massachusetts, 1936), pp. 15-16. William Everett in his geneology of the Everett family places the arrival around 1636, but like Edward was unsure of Richard's origins in England. William did note that if Richard was of the Everards, who were somehow connected to William Pynchon of Essex County, it can be assumed he too came from Essex. But William cites another study on the Descendants of John Dwight in which the name Richard Everett appears as one who came in the same ship with the original John Dwight from Dedham. Edward thought Richard came from Misshire.

[2]Everett, Descendants, pp. 21-34, 41; Everett, "Autobiography" (1850), p. 7, EEP.

Edward Everett described his ancestors not as public servants but as "respectable cultivators of the soil," for there were few in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who were not strongly attached to the land.[3] It was Edward Everett's generation which adopted a new life style and left the soil.

While ancestral tradition has an important role in value formation, it is the parents who translate the tradition into a pattern of life for the newest members. It was the ninth and youngest child of Ebenezer Everett, born June 11, 1752, and named Oliver after the defender of the English Puritan faith, who presented to his son, Edward, a picture of life and reality.[4] Though written many years after his father's death, Edward Everett's autobiography contains abundant references to his experience with his father as well as to Oliver Everett's earlier life. Though they would have few years with each other, this detailed manuscript and Edward's own life is confirmation of the strong impression Oliver Everett made on his son.

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[3]Edward Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch" (1830), p. 11, EEP; Edward Everett, Orations and Speeches on Various Occasions, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Boston, 1850), 2:180 (hereafter cited as Orations)

[4]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 8, EEP.

Ebenezer Everett, a man in his mid-forties when Oliver was born, tended to dominate the life of his family. As he could afford to send only one child to college, Moses, physically the weakest, was chosen. Oliver, though showing some youthful interest in music, was denied such a career and was apprenticed to his older brother, Aaron, to learn the trade of carpentry.[5] But a strong desire had grown in Oliver to attend Harvard. Edward, having no financial concerns during his schooling, marvelled at his father's ability to maintain himself while preparing courses in Latin and Greek. Perhaps working on a farm in the summer, or keeping school in the winter, perhaps with some aid from his older brother Moses, Oliver managed to accumulate the needed funds and preparatory skill to see him through college.[6]

Though his college years were disrupted by the conflict in 1775, libraries and classes often adjusting to the necessities of war, in 1779 Oliver Everett was graduated.[7] The following year he joined his brother

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[5]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 1-2, "Autobiography," p. 8, EEP.

[6]Everett, Descendants, pp. 65-67; Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p.2, "Autobiography," pp.8-9, EEP.

[7]Samuel Eliot Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936 (Massachusetts, 1936), pp.145-146, 149, 151-153; Everett, "Autobiography," p.10, EEP; Everett, Descendants, pp.65-67. Edward while President of Harvard College checked the college records and found in the College Faculty Records a "creditable mention of my father," but since commencement was not held his precise rank in the class did not appear. Everett, "Autobiography," p.10, EEP.

Moses at Dorchester and began the study of divinity. Following this period, Oliver was invited to "settle" at the New South Church in Boston.[8] Edward recalled hearing about his father's "role" in the religious controversy of the period, though he wrote that this "role" was more a part of the culmination of that movement. The choice of Oliver by the new, but established, liberal majority, however, would indicate that his views were at least known, and his role, therefore, could hardly be considered passive. Concerning Oliver's preaching, Edward wrote, "it was very little doctrinal, and destitute of rhetorical ornament, but marked by seriousness, clear reasoning, and practical views. His manner, I have been told by those who remember him, was unimpassioned." The style and the doctrinal content were, no doubt, acceptable to the liberal board for Oliver Everett retained this position for the next ten years. And in 1792, when ill health forced his retirement, the Rev. John Bradford accepted it with "poignant sorrow."[9]

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[8]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 10, EEP; Everett, Descendants, pp. 65-67; Paul Revere Frothingham, Edward Everett, Orator and Statesman (Boston, 1925), pp. 3-4 (hereafter cited as Frothingham, Everett).

[9]Frothingham, Everett, p. 4; Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 10, 12, EEP; Everett, Descendants, pp. 65-67. Conrad Wright in his study of the unitarian movement records the fiery argument which errupted at the New South Church during Oliver Everett's interview. "There was one episode at an ordaining council for Oliver Everett, who had been

Letters from Manassuah Cutler and Fisher Ames show that during these years Oliver Everett had a strong interest in politics. Writing from New York in 1790, both sought Oliver's advice and offered their own views on Alexander Hamilton's economic program then pending before Congress. It appears from these two letters that Oliver endorsed the "nationalist" position. Edward remembered that his father had invested, from what money he could save, in public securities and in the stock of the United States Bank. "Upon the whole," concluded Ames, "I think the creditors have reason to hope they have passed over the worst period of their expedation."[10] Oliver Everett did not, however, actively participate in political life until some years later.

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called to the New South Church, when it looked as though the pudding would be out of the bag for fair. The discussion began when the candidate was asked for his views on the Trinity. 'At last Dr. Chauncy grew mad, told Deacon Jeffres he was a fool, & Deacon Greenough that he knew nothing, & was fit only to lift up his hand, which was all anybody expected from him.' Angry words were spoken in reply, and the argument went on for an hour, until Dr. Cooper of the Brattle Street Church succeeded in quieting the storm." Conrad Wright, The Beginning of Unitarianism in America (Boston, 1955), p.191. The geneological study of William Everett notes Oliver's friendship with Dr. Freeman of Kings Chapel,"a reputed liberal" and that Mr. Everett "was considered belonging to the liberal wing of the Congregational body." Everett, Descendants,pp.65-67.

[10]Everett, "Autobiography,"1:18; Rev.Dr. Manassuah Cutler to Rev. Oliver Everett,24 February 1890, Hon. Fisher Ames to Rev. Oliver Everett,24 February 1890, in Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 15-20, EEP.

During these years at South Church he had courted and married Lucy Hill, the granddaughter of the well-to-do Boston merchant, Alexander Hill, who had adopted and raised her after the untimely death of her parents. The marriage took place on November 6, 1787. Six months later, on May 15, 1788, their first child was born, named Oliver. Two years later, on March 19, 1790, the second son arrived, also destined for a public career. The family named this newest arrival after Lucy Everett's paternal grandfather, Alexander Hill Everett. That year the family moved into a three-story colonial house built in 1770, and located on a few acres in the thinly populated neighborhood of "Five Corners," Dorchester.[11] These few acres, it seems, provided the older Everett with an "occupation." Edward remembered his father "following the cart in haying time with a rake in his hand, dressed in a long calico gown, such as gentlemen wore at that time in warmer weather." The following year the first girl, Lucy, was born and finally Lucy Everett had another son. The date was April 11, 1794, and this sixth member of the sixth generation was baptized Edward Everett.[12]

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[11]Everett, Descendants, p.65; Everett, "Autobiography," p.27, EEP; William Dana Orcutt, Good Old Dorchester (Cambridge, 1893), pp. 145-147, 185.

[12]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 14, EEP.

At the time of Edward's birth, Oliver at forty-two had already reached a stage of maturity and stability in his own development. Edward, therefore, would not experience the youthful energy of his father. Rather his environment was shaped by a mature individual who possessed a well-defined world view.

Though Oliver had left the ministry before Edward's birth, he had not withdrawn from society. The correspondence with Fisher Ames and Manassuah Cutler reflects not only an interest in politics, but a general interest in the growth of the country, especially economic institutions and western expansion. "His intimacy with Dr. Cutler," wrote Edward, "had made him familiar with the steps taken by the early emigrants to Ohio. He availed himself of every opportunity to gain information relative to the unsettled territory of the United States."[13]

At home, around the evening fire, as friends and family gathered, they often discussed the politics of the day. The earliest political event of which Edward had any recollection was the "quasi" naval war with France in 1798. The issue was the effect of "war" upon the price

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[13]Mr. Cyrus Everett to Rev. Oliver Everett, 17 May 1792; Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 23-25, EEP.

of flour, which some said would cost twenty dollars a barrel. Where Oliver stood on this is not clear. There is no indication that he opposed the French, though he often brought the British press with exciting news of Napoleon's cause into the house. Edward reminded his reader, however, that this was not due to any pro-British proclivities but rather to his father's temperament. His sense of justice, his respect for consistency, and his pity of isolation had evoked in him a sympathy for a neighbor, Arodi Thayer. Apparently pensioned by the English government for services rendered to the Crown before the Revolution, Thayer lent these newspapers to Oliver.[14]

But if Oliver Everett was not "pro-British" in the political sense, he was certainly inclined toward England and supported its American sympathizers. His endorsement of the Federalist party during these years resulted in an appointment as Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Norfolk, in 1799. When the Federalists divided in 1800, Oliver threw his support to the friends of Adams and the moderates. In 1802, his party again rewarded him with a congressional nomination.

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[14]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 16, 19, EEP.

His defeat was due, wrote Edward, to "a heavy majority in the district...opposed to the administration...."[15]

But politics never became a substitute for classical education in the Everett household. Edward's interest in the educational process never diminished as recollections of this aspect of his childhood made up the greatest part of his autobiography.

His earliest memory reached back to "sitting on my father's knee to say the Lord's Prayer. It cannot be expected that I should remember when I did this for the first time; but I was in the habit of repeating the Lord's Prayer to my Father before I knew the meaning of some of the simplest expressions contained in it." The small bookcase belonging to the family contained an estimated one hundred and fifty books, including "the Sermons of Tillotson,...Shakespeare's plays in Theobald's edition,...Hume's history of England,the natural history of religion, Robertson's Charles V, Cato's Letter, and Shaftesbury's characteristics...." While Edward was fed his diet of "goody two shoes and mother goose," his father never sought to dissuade him from reading more difficult literature. For the most part, it was the scarcity of

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[15] Ibid., p.22; Everett, Descendants, pp. 65-67.

children's books which drove the youngsters "to those of a higher order, not so well adopted for us." One of Edward's earliest attempts was Shakespeare, but his favorite was Plutarch's Lives, and Gultine's Geography provided him with the first systematic idea of the history of the United States and especially the American Revolution.[16]

At the age of three, when Edward was not old enough to travel by himself, and forced to hold "to my sisters' apron as a protection against the cattle in the road," he was entered at Lucy Clap's school. He was introduced to the old standard New England Primer and the "Catchise," which was repeated to parents on Sunday. After two years here and another local "dames school," he was sent to a "village school." How this learning experience affected children of three and four, we can only surmise. With the normal channels of release for "childish" energy shut off, the serious orderly atmosphere of the classroom could not but shape future views toward education as well as life. Miss Clap was a kindly woman, Edward recalled, and "endeavored, as far as possible, to lessen the tedium of confinement at school to the little folks who were sent there, 'to get them out of the way.'" The village

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[16] Ibid., pp.1, 21.

school under the direction of Mr. Ohesiphones Tileston must have been a somewhat harrowing experience for the lad of five, as well, as discipline was often obtained with the use of a "britton stick."[17] But Edward's stay here was brief. His father, thinking him prepared for more advanced learning, entered him at the central town school, under the direction of James Blake Howe, "a skilful and efficient teacher." The fact that Edward's two older brothers, Oliver and Alexander, also attended only added joy to this new adventure.[18]

For the most part, Edward's education was a serious affair. When the family was introduced to the art of painting by Abiel Chandler, who had replaced Mr. Howe at the central school and was residing with the Everetts, Edward was considered too young to experiment in this art form. This was a strange notion, but consistent with New England values and reminiscent of Oliver Everett's encounter with his father. Edward, years later, thought of his loss as a youngster, for though he grew interested in the arts, he always regretted not having had the training at an early age. "As I had occasion to notice

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[17]Ibid., pp. 2-4, 9; Adolphe Meyer, An Educational History of the American People (New York, 1959), p. 119.

[18]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 10, Everett "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 3, EEP.

in after life in France and Germany, how many young men learn to draw and play on some musical instrument, I have deeply regretted that these useful and refined arts are not generally taught in our school" (perhaps "at home" should have been added at this point).[19]

It should not be thought that Edward Everett's childhood consisted merely of study and politics. Though he once almost died from measles, he was a reasonably healthy child. When permitted to do so, he participated in the other children's games and activities. There was the yearly eel hunt which provided great enjoyment. But most amusements were of a more refined nature. There were strolls to "various interesting localities in the neighborhood," Dorchester Heights for example, hunting for gooseberries, or playing in or around the "enchanted forest" between Dorchester and Roxbury. The Roxbury forest was the focus of much childish conversation and fantasy about excursions into its depths and encounters with the mysterious "negro hut somewhere within." In the winter the children amused themselves by snow castles, sledding down the hills, or skating on the "great pond."[20]

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[19]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 12-13, EEP.

[20]Ibid., pp. 1-6, 11-12.

In the evening, younger members of the family entertained visitors with "specimens of declamation." Edward, in 1850, could still recall two written for him by the "good natured pastor," Rev. Dr. Harris, which he most often recited. Clearly, these hours before guests, in addition to the formal periods of declamation at school and his father's oratory skill, helped develop within the boy the techniques of public speaking, from a sensitivity for phraseology to confidence and composure before an audience. All was not performance during the evening, as it was also time to discuss town events or recent gossip, like the excitement which followed the murder of Elizabeth Fales in Dedham or the duel which took place one summer's day in 1800 on Dorchester Neck.[21]

There was one event, however, which was most significant for Edward. On February 22, 1802, Oliver Everett presented a eulogy on George Washington before the citizens of Dorchester. It was the first public appearance Oliver Everett had made in eight years: poor health had forced him to withdraw from the pulpit and the public platform as well.

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[21] Ibid., pp. 4-8, 16, 23-24.

Edward, nearly eight years old, did not take part in the procession, but was allowed to go into the meeting house with his mother long before the exercises commenced. Finally, the moment came, and Oliver Everett approached the desk, pallid because of overwork, and began with "subdued tone." He closed his introduction with the words, "Your candor is called to its severest exercise. Prepare then to hear the words of truth, unadorned with the flowers of eloquence, and uttered with a feeble voice."

After the oration, the whole family attended a dinner and reception. Edward, emulating his father, rose, pointing his hand into the air, and began,

> From Vernon's mount behold the hero rise
> Resplendent forms attended throughout the skies.

The poetical effusion went on for twelve or fourteen lines, the young Edward keeping his hand elevated throughout.[22] Each family in town was furnished a small volume containing one copy of Dr. Howes' discourse delivered on the Sunday after the news of Washington's death and one copy of Washington's Farewell Address, together with Oliver Everett's Eulogy. In appreciation, the black cloth which draped the hall was taken down and presented to Oliver with a suit of clothes cut from this

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[22] Ibid., pp. 25-26, 20-24.

material. The Boston Columbian Centinel wrote, "Comparison would be invidious, but it may safely be asserted that for correctness of composition, aptness of metaphor, pertinency of remark, the most happy delineation of character and profound political and moral deduction, the eulogy will rank among the best tributes of genius and eloquence to the fame of Washington."[23] The emotional response which Washington's name generated in the community as well as his father's successful relationship with that name had a strong impression on Edward. At the age of fifty-six he still remembered in great detail the unfolding events of this early experience.[24]

These, it appears, were happy years for Edward Everett, now a boy of eight. There was not an inkling they would come abruptly to an end one winter's day in 1802. Though Oliver's health had not been the best during the last two years of his life, there was no marked decline near the end. Oliver had, in fact, just been through the November election, and his sudden death came as a shock to Edward and the family. On December 5th, he was struck with palsy and died two weeks later. "I was at first rather stupified," Edward recalled,

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[23] Ibid., p. 26; Columbian Centinel, 22, 23, 24 February 1802.

[24] Ibid., p. 22.

"then distressed."[25] "The loss of a father," he wrote later,

> is one that a child of eight years cannot fully appreciate. Our father was the kindest and most indulgent of parents; loved and revered by his children and as far as I remember the thought of contradicting, or even differing from him--far less disobeying him--never occurred to us. Accustomed to regard him as a kind of earthly Providence, we looked to him for the first impulse to every movement in the family circle. This however was by no means the result of severe discipline, but of that gentle ascendency which belongs to years, wisdom and experience, and the sacred obligation of nature. The loss of such a parent at the most crucial period of life is irreparable and when that failings of my youth or manhood are remembered against me, I hope it will not be forgotten that before I was 9 years old, I was deprived of a father's guidance and counsel.[26]

But Edward at eight was a well developed child. Oliver had trained his son well. He had presented to Edward a clear picture of a world defined by the eighteenth century, and the tradition of personal identification with the community's social and political institutions had been preserved.

In the spring of 1802, Lucy Everett took the family to Boston and established residency at the north end of Proctor's Lane, near her paternal grandfather, Alexander Hill.[27] Lucy, as well as Oliver, accepted the necessity

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[25] Ibid., p. 26.

[26] Ibid., p. 26-27.

[27] Ibid., p. 1.

of a formal education for her children. Edward was immediately placed in the reading and writing schools at North Bennett Street. He attended Mr. Tilestone's writing school for about a year and Master Little's reading classes for almost two. From the latter he acquired a "good knowledge of the principles of English grammar...and the elements of geography as contained in some popular manual." In the spring of 1804, upon being withdrawn from writing school, Edward began the study of Latin in preparation for college. Everett apparently worked hard at his lessons, and at the annual examination received one of the Franklin Medals for reading.[28] In this year, his grandfather Alexander Hill died leaving in his will approximately thirty thousand dollars to Lucy. After rejecting the Latin Public School, Lucy Everett decided to send Edward to the private school kept by Mr. Ezekiel Webster. Mr. Webster, a gentleman of "eminent talents and great worth," was the older brother of Daniel Webster, destined to be a long-time friend and confidant of Everett. In fact, Edward's relationship with Daniel goes back to this small private

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[28] Ibid., pp. 2-5; Everett, Orations and Speeches, 4 vols (Boston, 1850-1868), 3:356.

school on Short Street at the back of Rowe's pasture. Ezekiel became ill during Edward's short tenure and Daniel, just completing his law studies in Boston, filled his brother's place.[29] Near the end of his life, Daniel Webster, recalling those few days spent together, wrote his life-long friend: "We now and then see, stretching across the heavens, a long streak of clear, blue, cerulean sky, without cloud, or mist, or haze, and such appears to me our acquaintance, from the time when I heard you for a week recite your lessons in the little school house on Short Street to the date hereof."[30]

In the fall of 1805, Edward Everett was removed from private school and enrolled in the Boston Public Latin School, which had been reorganized under the care of Samuel Cooper Thacher. The school had a history which dated back to 1635, when the early colonists modeled their secondary schools after the British "Latin" or "grammar" schools, which prepared boys to enter into the university. Though the curriculum was reduced from seven to four years in 1789, the students, as earlier, studied only Latin and Greek. This could hardly be

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[29] Ibid., 4:11-12; Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 5, EEP.

[30] Daniel Webster to Edward Everett, 21 July 1852 in Everett "Autobiography," p. 13.

considered a natural educational diet for an eleven year old. Nevertheless, years later, Edward thought that, of all the college preparatory schools in Massachusetts, only the Boston Latin School and Andover Academy deserved the name school.[31] He remained in this institution for about a year and a half. At the end of the 1806 term, now twelve years old, he was awarded one of the three Franklin Medals provided to each school.

With both older brothers pursuing their own careers and his mother's time consumed by six children during this period, the family did not provide sufficient companionship or intellectual stimulation for young Everett. With a group of other boys, he formed a little club which they called the "library society." Among the books Everett and the others collected was the unabridged copy of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. This soon became his favorite. There was the Oratorical Society as well, where youngsters would meet at each others' houses for declamation. "Two of the members were superior speakers,"

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[31]Everett, "Autobiography," 4:15; Russel Blain Nye, The Cultural Life of the New Nation (New York, 1960), p. 160; John W. Keys, "Factors in the Training and Early Education of Edward Everett Accounting for His Ability As a Public Speaker" (Master's Thesis, State University of Iowa, 1939), p. 15; Freemen R. Butts, A Cultural History of Western Education (New York, 1955), pp. 251-252; Ellwood Cubberley, Public Education in the United States (Boston, New York, 1919), pp. 165-167.

he wrote. "I was one of the poorest and learned nothing. Neither did I make any improvement in declamation at school, though we had an exercise in declamation once a week. I was afraid of the ridicule sure to attend an unsuccessful attempt at display."[32]

In December, 1807, however, Edward said goodbye to his neighborhood friends. Lucy Everett had agreed to send him to Andover, New Hampshire to be with his brother Alexander at Phillips Academy. In recording this episode in his autobiography, Everett provided a rare comment about his mother. Edward did remember being "indulged with a ticket to the pit of the Federal Street Theatre, three or four times in a season,"[33] but how he obtained these tickets is not mentioned, though his mother probably gave them to him. The few letters which exist between mother and son were written while Edward was at Andover, and these often contain Lucy's apology for not writing sooner. This failing she attributed not to a "want of affection" but rather a lack of what to say and not "to making inventions."[34] For the next

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[32]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 7-10, 15-17, EEP.

[33]Ibid., p. 20.

[34]Lucy Everett to Edward Everett, 2 April 1807, 29 May 1807, EEP.

six months at Phillips Academy Edward studied English, mathematics, and especially Latin, under the tutelage of his brother, Alexander, Dr. Benjamin Abbot, and Nathan Hale. Though John Phillips was a stern and aristocratic Calvinist, the school was known for its democratic spirit and tolerant religious view. Reinforcing the liberal religious training received from his father was the "feared, respected, and loved" Benjamin Abbot who belonged to the new school which became organized Unitarianism.[35] During this brief stay it appears that Everett's oratory skills improved remarkably. In the summer of 1807, he was chosen, out of eighty students in attendance, to deliver the valedictory Latin address composed by himself. That fall, at the age of thirteen and a half, he became the third member of his family to enter Harvard.

Everett's experience at Harvard for the next four years reinforced his view of the world. Harvard was not a world of change and flux but of tradition and stability.[36] It was a life consisting of a diet of Livy and Horace, and of weekly recitations in English, Hebrew, and French. It was a world defined by Montesquieu, Boswell, Goldsmith,

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[35]Myron Williams, The Story of Phillips Exeter (Exeter, New Hampshire, 1957), pp. 20, 25; Frank Cunningham, Recollections and Impressions (1883), p. 78.

[36]Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936, pp. 184-201.

Pope, by Paley, Gibbon, Burke, and John Locke (of the latter, Edward recalled putting to memory major parts of his Essay on Human Understanding).[37] Among his classmates were to be found the children of the New England elite: Elisha Goddard, John Rutledge, Harrison Gray Otis, Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham, John Chipman Gray, Joseph Story, and John White Webster - certainly not schoolmates whose values would offer a striking substitute to those already developed in Everett. As for the faculty, he could recall almost none who impressed him. The scholarship was low, he remembered, and most "made not an attempt to rise above it."[38]

It was during his stay at Harvard that Everett discovered Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography. In his spare time he often read this small volume which prescribed the rational, well-ordered, industrious life. "I used to form tables for a weekly record of conduct and to draw up rules of prudence and morality in imitation of those which I found in Franklin's biography." "I learned from it," he wrote, "the superiority of a modest intimation of opinion over dogmatic assertion, and the propriety of

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[37]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 3,8, 17-21; pp. 1, 15, EEP.

[38]Ibid.,pp. 5-7; Records of the College Faculty, (1806-1814), 8:96-98, Harvard University Archives (hereafter cited as Faculty Records); Frothingham, Everett, p. 10.

speaking with deference on controverted points."[39]

As others had seen the merits of Franklin's dictum in their own achievements, Everett's college years proved for him its validity. His industrious work would bring him rewards. Only once in his senior year, at the age of seventeen, did he feel the urge to relax from his "studious habits." With the help of his friends, however, he overcame the urge to go astray, and at the end of his college career had obtained the reputation as an exceptional scholar. At graduation, he offered "An Oration in English," and received the "Hopkins Prize." His achievements were further rewarded with admittance into the Phi Beta Kappa Society.[40]

In 1811, at the age of seventeen-and-a-half, Edward Everett prepared for a most significant choice; what field or course he would pursue as a career. But was there really a choice for this graduate? He had no trade, little experience with the land, and neither the funds nor knowledge to enter into commerce. His training was academic, scholarly, and intellectual. The area of education was available, but no suitable offer was made.

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[39]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 2-3 EEP.

[40]Faculty Records, 8:263, 275, 314; Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 18-19; pp. 15-16, EEP.

Nor did Edward ever consider it, though his brother Alexander had moved in this direction. Edward recalled some interest in pursuing law, but this too was not serious. The ministry was the choice. His whole youthful experience, the family tradition which had been established by Deacon John Everett, his oratorical skill, his inclinations all pointed to the ministry. And if superfluous, there was nevertheless the guidance of his friend and family minister, the young, brilliant Joseph Stevens Buckminster of Boston's Brattle Street Church. During their meetings the college student heard the young minister discuss the merits of the ministry as compared to other scholarly pursuits. Perhaps it was the oration of Buckminster at graduation in 1809 which really convinced him. It was "imposingly beautiful in itself and was eminently to my youthful judgment as being the first speciman I had heard of the highest order of academic eloquence. It made an impression on me not yet effected by time."[41]

On July 31, 1811, Edward Everett took his place on the speaker's podium and prepared himself to address the convocation. His life attitudes and his world view had been solidified during these years at Harvard. Though

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[41]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 26-27, pp. 9-10, EEP.

not born of Brahmin parents--intellectually, emotionally, and psychologically--he was the child of this class. He had accepted their values and attitudes, applied them to his life, and was successful. On this summer's day Edward Everett, age seventeen-and-a-half, gave praise to the country whose institutions had provided him an education and a way of life.

> Ye offspring of science, who quit these loved walls,
> To launch on the world, where your sires have preceded,
> March fearlessly on, where your destiny calls;--
> By no perils dismayed, by no labours impeded:
> By your country stand fast
> Till the danger be past
> And the moment of slavery--may that be your last:
> For the sons of old Harvard their RIGHTS shall maintain,
> While its strength nerves an arm, or the blood
> swells a vein.

In this, his opening stanza of the graduation oration, entitled "Adams and Liberty," Everett called for Harvard men to stand fast by their country in this moment of possible danger. Remember your father's struggles, he reminded them and, "If <u>your</u> swords must be drawn, when the war tempest gathers, Be dauntless to save What your forefathers gave; Let foe feel your triumph, or march o'er your grave." He bade them in what ever profession they chose--whether it be the Muses, in Science, Law or the Ministry--not to forget the duties of the patriot, not to forget the poor and oppressed.

Then let's join hand in hand,
An affectionate band,
And be first in the service of God and our land.
For the sons of old Harvard their RANK shall maintain,
While its strength nerves an arm, or the blood swells a vein.[42]

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[42] Class Oration, Poem and Songs, "An Oration by John T. Cooper & Poem delivered before the Government and Students of Harvard University at the Departure of the Senior Class, July 31, 1811. 'Songs' by Edward Everett, "Tune 'Adams and Liberty'" Harvard Library Archives.

CHAPTER II

A THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

In September, 1811 Edward Everett entered Harvard's divinity school, if, as he wrote, "school at that time it could be called."[1] Because there was no organized system of study, students merely attending sessions with those professors interested in the questions of theology, it was Everett's good fortune to live at the home of the theological instructor and President of the college, John Thornton Kirkland.[2] Samuel Eliot Morison said of Kirkland: "In a word, he embodied the Federalist ideal of a gentleman and scholar; the best of the 'old fashioned New England divines softening down with Arminianism,' good wholesome, sound-bodied, sane-minded, cheerful-spirited men ...."

John Kirkland's appointment to the presidency of the college was the culmination of the liberal movement.

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[1]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 17, EEP.

[2]Ibid.

In 1807 the appointment of Henry Ware as Hollis Professor opened Harvard to the more liberal theologians. Though Professor Ware was introduced as a liberal who was needed in contrast to the "narrow sectarianism of their opponents," by 1809 four other professorships had been filled by men of the same persuasion. In fact when the like-minded merchants, lawyers and administrators of Boston presented Kirkland in 1810, no rival was suggested.[3]

Under the guidance of Ware and Kirkland, Everett entered upon the study of theology and languages. Hebrew and German were of primary concern during these years, and he read considerably from the Old Testament, the Talmud, and the theological works of Professor Johann Gottfried Eichhorn of Göttingen University. After completing his first year of study, Everett continued on at Harvard as Latin tutor, a position offered in recognition of his scholarly achievements.[4] As tutor he instructed the freshman class in the readings of Livy

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[3]William Walter Sweet, Religion in the Development of America (New York, 1952), p. 193; Morison, Three Centuries at Harvard, pp. 196-197.

[4]Faculty Records, 8:312; Corporation Papers (1812-1814), unsigned letter dated July, 1812, Harvard University Archives (hereafter cited as CP); Edward Everett, "Dissertation on the Art of Painting," College Records, 5:90, Harvard University Archives; Records of the Overseers, 5:416, Harvard University Archives. In the summer of 1812 Everett was awarded the Bowdoin Prize for his dissertation.

and Horace. "The duty was light and agreeable" Everett later wrote, "much of my time was left for private study."[5]

During these years of training, Everett continued his relationship with his advisor and friend Joseph Buckminster. In the summer of 1812, at the age of twenty-seven, "having gained a reputation and an influence rarely equalled at any age," Buckminster's life was cut short. Everett was deeply moved by this tragedy, spending considerable time at the bedside of Buckminster during his final days.[6]

Everett's friendship, however, had been a meaningful one. Along with Kirkland and Ware, Buckminster had continued the theological education which had its beginning with Oliver Everett. Under the guidance of these men, Everett continued to perceive and organize the world within the framework of liberal Calvinism. By the time he was nineteen, he had amply demonstrated, to the pleasure of many, the results of this intellectual training. Thus when Buckminster's death left the Brattle Street Church without a minister, the Society, in October, 1813, decided to invite Everett to preach for a month's period on probation. In November he was informed of the

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[5]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 20, EEP.

[6]Ibid., p. 19.

Society's satisfaction with his "talents learning and piety and other ministerial endowments." He received an invitation from the board "with a belief that his settlement would promote the happiness of this Church and serve the interests of our holy religion."[7]

Everett exhibited some hesitation in accepting the position. "Nothing but the blind indiscretion of youth can excuse my undertaking such a task, especially as my health was far from robust."[8] Whether or not his health or his youth were ever weighed is unclear, the decision certainly was important, in any case. Brattle Street did have a reputation which reflected its famous and testing pastorate. Furthermore, he would surely be compared to the late Buckminster. Despite these hazards, Everett decided to accept.[9] "Thus at an age when with most young men the choice of a profession is still to be made I found myself engaged in the most responsible and arduous duties which man can undertake. I entered upon them with spirit, zeal, and singleness of heart," he wrote.[10]

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[7]Records of the Church in Brattle Square, pp. 54-55, Massachusetts Historical Society; William O. Sullivan, Clerk to Edward Everett, 28 November 1813, EEP. Besides providing a house for his residence the Society would also pay him twenty-five dollars per week.

[8]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 22.

[9]Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[10]Ibid., p.22;Records of the Church in Brattle Square, pp. 56-58.

By the time Everett assumed his ministry at Brattle Street, the lines of religious conflict had been drawn. Unitarianism had made great progress. The appointment of Henry Ware and John Kirkland to positions of influence at Harvard had signaled a significant increase in liberal theology throughout the Boston Church system, although the name "Unitarian" had not yet been accepted.[11] The experience at Brattle Street, therefore, provided Everett with a dual education. On the one hand, he was forced to systematize many of the philosophical and theological ideas studied during his college years. Secondly, he was introduced more fully to the theologically liberal Brahmins. While Charles Chauncy and Jonathan Mayhew had had a great deal to do with the establishment of "Unitarian" ideals among the Boston upper classes, the fact is that it was the prosperous merchants and professional men, whose confidence in themselves had intensified whatever initial distaste they held for the concept of man's impotence in the hands of an arbitrary and angry God.[12] Everett had met Brahmins before, but his

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[11] Nye, The Cultural Life of the New Nation, p. 224; Sweet, Religion, pp. 190-193; Wright, Unitarianism, pp. 279-280.

[12] Wright, Unitarianism, pp. 6-8; Sweet, Religion, pp. 190-193.

acquaintances had been limited to the youthful members of the great families or informal contact with their parents. Now, as minister of the Brattle Street Church, he came into close contact with Boston's leading families. In addition, he met the other important "Unitarian" ministers-such as John Abbot of the First Church, John Lathrop of the Second Church, Francis Parkman of The New North Church, Charles Lowell of West Church, and the great William Ellery Channing of the Church on Federal Street.[13]

Everett's sermons covered a wide diversity of subjects and represented his first major body of ideas. They were well thought out and researched. He himself felt that Harvard had not prepared him fully for his post. The position itself required more than mere evidence of literary skill he thought. Nevertheless, he worked extremely hard and each Sunday provided the congregation with a full day's sermon.[14]

In his sermons Everett expressed not only the important tenets of liberal theology, but the basic intellectual assumptions and disposition of his pastorate.

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[13] Records of the Church in Brattle Square, p. 57; Frothingham, Everett, pp. 21-22.

[14] Everett, "Autobiography," p. 22-23.

These were the views of the intellect, drawn from the inheritance of the Age of Reason. Reason as a method no longer needed justification. Its validity was proven by the progress of the age, the harnessing of nature, and the prosperity of this pastorate.[15] Everett's theology reflected the man of confidence who believed that the same method for success in the outer world was applicable to spiritual salvation. His listeners wanted to hear of harmony and not conflict, of the power they possessed and not the submissive role they must play.

Reason was the key to heavenly salvation as it was to worldly success. Reason, Everett assured, "points out /to man/ what is free and good, and conscience which urges him to pursue them."[16] Unlike the lower forms of inanimate and unorganized matter which were moved "only by actual or physical force," or animate life which might possess vitality, sensation and instinct, it was man who alone exhibited "the traces of that inexplicable union of sense and intelligence, motion and will, act and thought, which are peculiar to his rational nature." His free and rational mind was therefore the source of

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[15]Wright, Unitarianism, pp. 3-4; Arthur Ekirch, The Idea of Progress, 1815-1860, (New York, 1944), pp. 11, 13.

[16]Edward Everett, "Sermons," 19 July 1813, 11 February 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

his voluntary motions and actions, and functions in accordance with the motives of individual man. "Hence man besides powers has dispositions, besides a physical character he has a moral one."[17]

The results of these actions are what Everett called "secondary causes." These influence the world. God always has control over these "causes" but seldom interrupts; He has the power to supercede their effects by miraculous interpositions, but He ordinarily allows them to follow their causal pattern.[18] Everett would admit that in most cases man could choose good, but this disposition was related to the grace of God. Reason which was the central factor of this disposition, and necessary to choose good, was provided by the Supreme Being. Man had this power, and Everett beseeched him to use it to "unfold the gates of heaven, and sit down upon its thrones...." This task we must do by ourselves, he advised. To teach us the way, God sent his only Son. "If you blindly refuse, to learn of him, there is no other resort, to which you can fly, and no other name

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[17]Everett, "Sermons," 27 September 1813, EEP, vol. 239.

[18]Everett, "Sermons," 1 August 1813, EEP, vol. 239.

whereby you can be saved."[19] "God," warned Everett,

> has left it to us, to work out our Own Salvation. That the vast accumulation of privileges, with which he has endowed us, our minds and our sciences, Reason, and Revelation, the light of the gospel, and the gift of Christ, that all this is left for us to improve or to neglect, that it is left for us to derive from it the welfare of our Soul, or turn it all into reproach and condemnation.[20]

These views represented Everett's theory of free will, man's disposition to choose the way to Heaven. The teachings give us a method to obtain salvation which is directed to "our affections as rational creatures." It follows that our salvation is something "which we must work out for ourselves in the appointed exercise of our Understanding and Affections." In a sermon given on March 25, 1814 and on the 27th of the same month Everett reminded his parishioners that

> it is a fact which will not be denied that the scriptures at least allow man to have a Mind, granting for a moment that they do not address themselves to it. Now to what purpose could we suppose a rational mind to be <u>given</u> to man, if he were not to exercise it in pursuing the end of his nature, Happiness....[21]

But what of the elect, those who alone were chosen for eternal bliss? The concept of election was defined

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[19]Everett, "Sermons," 25 March 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

[20]<u>Ibid</u>.

[21]Everett, "Sermons," 25 March 1814, 27 March 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

by Everett as a process by which any who sought the way would find the way. To be of the elect was in fact to be one who chose the way of Christ. The "charm" the "magic" power in Christianity was that those who are called to it will be brought to Heaven. In other words, the treasures in Heaven were available to "them that seek it."[22] Election, as he saw it, was not something of the past but belonged to those "who receive its /Christianity's/ glad tidings; and the words express not the assurance of their title to heavenly happiness, but their invitation to the privileges of the visible church below." The election mentioned in the sacred writings, concluded Everett, did not refer to the "final felicity of heaven" but to the recognition and partaking of the "privileges of the Gospel."

> That election to the privileges of the visible church, if not the very same thing as Selection to Salvation will certainly lead to it. That Christ's professing disciples below will certainly be his redeemed followers above. And that a broad highway has been reared by him, which leads from the threshold of every church, to the gate of the New Jerusalem.[23]

While man had the gift of reason, Everett insisted that his flock recognize man's complex nature. We might

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[22]Everett, "Sermons," 29 January 1814, 27 March 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

[23]Everett, "Sermons," 25 March 1814, 27 March 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

have the power to reason and a conscience to guide us, but man also had an "impulse of vice." "As for Man, while he is the noblest he is also the frailest of the Works of God, and the refinement and sensibility of his organs and powers are so many new avenues of suffering and death."[24] In fact, one major function of reason was to discover not only the dignity of one's nature, but "his weakness, imperfection and unworthiness."[25] This duality was no accident. Both the Savior and the disciples teach us how to make use of both. He who knew of his weakness would be in better condition not to offend God.[26]

The problem, as Everett saw it, was not that man would underestimate his power to achieve, but rather would tend to be blinded by his achievement. Thus he cautioned his successful pastorate not to be deceived by abilities, looks, skill, wisdom, and strength.[27] Those who achieve worldly success should not forget Him who is responsible for all this. "We see our own ability

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[24]Everett, "Sermons," 25 September 1814, EEP, vol. 242.

[25]Everett, "Sermons," 28 September 1813, see also: 11 February 1814, 19 July 1813, EEP, vol. 239.

[26]Everett, "Sermons," October, 1814, EEP, vol. 242.

[27]Everett, "Sermons," 14 May 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

when we ought to see his bounty," cautioned Everett, "or call that chance, which we ought to call providence."[28]

The origins of evil, however, could not be traced to the Supreme Being. Evil in the world was not the product of God's planning, for this would be irreconcilable with the goodness of God. Further, this identification would imply that without man's consent and against his interest, God made his life miserable. "Let us not think that God works with the poor instruments of imperfect man." It is man who sacrifices man for the interest of man, and purchases luxury, power, and wealth with oppression, suffering and blood. This is not the way of God's work the young minister concluded.[29]

These views conformed to the Unitarian concept of the duality of man's nature - his capacity both for sin and for righteousness; the perception of life as a struggle to which man comes with the particular powers of the rational mind, and the ability, with the assistance of God, gradually to overcome sin.[30] Suffering was necessary for progress.

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[28]Everett, "Sermons," 10 June 1814, See also: 19 July, 1813, EEP, vol. 239.

[29]Everett, "Sermons," October, 1814, EEP vol. 242.

[30]Wright, Unitarianism, pp. 3-4; Joseph Harotunian, Piety Versus Moralism: The Passing of New England Theology (New York, 1937), pp. 186-187.

Everett's theology placed a premium on the inner life. In his sermon on the diversity of man's social conditions, he noted that riches were relative to one's definition. While one man might accumulate material riches, others failed in this quest. Nevertheless, there was still available those more significant riches which "Christ gives fairly and fully." It was the choice between inner pleasures or outer pleasures.[31]

> Moral and intellectual good then as it is a nobler object than the honors and pleasures of life, so it may be more easily and liberally obtained, and it is this internal happiness, which is forever in the possession of the righteous man, can he gain, by honest means, the protection and countenance of his neighbors, he is glad to do it and prompt in availing himself of his influence in the cause of righteousness and truth.[32]

Moderation which is necessary for the enriched life also teaches us to respect our place in society -- the "personal circumstances in which we are placed." "The moderate man does not hope and build a life on dreams, nor does he neglect the dangers he must encounter and the sufferings he must bear on his way to fulfill his ultimate plans." The moderate man "builds his hope upon foundations least likely to fail, and strives for objects most certain to be secured." He formulates his

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[31]Everett, "Sermons," 29 January 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

[32]Everett, "Sermons," 16 July 1813, EEP, vol. 239.

plan on a rational basis and does not waste time in a hopeless struggle for inaccessible goods. "Having formed his plans, his expectations, and hopes upon this rational scale, he pursued their accomplishment by the same principle. He does not hurry offward in the impatience of desire, but is content to be diligent and persevering."[33] As Arthur Ekirch has pointed out, here was a social philosophy which in later years would be used to maintain the status quo, the philosophy of social stability.[34]

The issue, therefore, was not success or wealth, but rather the time and means devoted to these ends. Moderation was in harmony with the good. The evil was in the extreme.

> This is the largest class of Christians, it is to be feared, the class of those who are willing to give a little attention to religion, but not a great deal; to pay to it the homage of respect and regard, to treat its institutions with civility and deference; to do all but the single thing which is needful, strictly obey its laws, and deeply breathe its spirit....The world is commenced by most, with the care of acquisition: they enter upon life desirous to all its honors or its riches....[35]

For those who had already achieved, Everett reminded them to continue to live within the same virtuous system.

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[33]Everett, "Sermons," July, 1814, EEP, vol. 242.

[34]Ekirch, Progress, pp. 166-193.

[35]Everett, "Sermons," 1 July 1814, 6 July 1814, EEP, vol. 242.

They must manifest in their lives the spirit of moderation and prudence as well as the historic Calvinist tenet of social responsibility.[36]

There was little in these sermons which demonstrate that Everett was an original thinker. Rather, they demonstrate that Everett possessed a remarkable intellectual capacity. Furthermore, if Everett's theological assumptions posed a psychological hurdle for those moving up the social ladder, for the Brahmins it was consistent with, and a projection of, their psychological and intellectual disposition. Contained within this theology was a value system which Everett had thoroughly absorbed and accepted as most valid. It is clear that it was more the product of his social environment than of deep soul searching. He had learned well the lessons of his youth. The rewards of society most clearly were given to those who supported the values of the established class. And who could skillfully document and give this value system an intellectual and theological foundation but the exceptional scholar Edward Everett.

During these years at Brattle Street, religious controversy erupted in Boston over the publication of George B. English's work, The Grounds of Christianity

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[36]Everett, "Sermons," July, 1814, EEP, vol. 242.

Examined, By Comparing the New Testament With the Old. As Everett saw it, English's thesis questioned the very foundations of Christianity by suggesting the Christ was not the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament. A thesis hardly justifiable, thought Everett, who discovered that its source was the old theological works on the origins of Christianity written by seventeenth-century rabbis.[37]

On August 14, 1814, after some consultation with his friend Moses Stuart of Andover Theological Seminary, who questioned the "expediency of answering English's book," and after receiving some opinions from William Ellery Channing, Edward Everett set forth his critique which he entitled, Defence of Christianity Against the Work of George B. English, A.M. Entitled The Grounds of Christianity Examined, By Comparing the New Testament With the Old.[38] Though Stuart had cautioned him against

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[37]Everett, "Autobiography," p:24; Edward Everett to Alexander Hill Everett, 5 January 1816, EEP; Edward Everett, Defence of Christianity Against the Work of George B. English, A.M. entitled The Ground of Christianity Examined, By Comparing the New Testament With the Old (Boston, 1814), "Introduction."

[38]Moses Stuart to Edward Everett, 14 October 1813, 25 December 1813; Everett, "Autobiography," p:26, EEP; A van der Kemp to Edward Everett 3 April 1815, EEP. Van der Kemp wrote, "It is with a lively satisfaction, that I can inform you, that I received your answer to Mr. English's work, but it afforded me a greater pleasure, as you appear not indifferent about my opinion of this elaborate performance." Harotunian, Piety, p. 201.

being verbose, Everett's study which concentrated basically on the question of Jesus' messianic character totaled five hundred pages.[39] This book, although his first major piece, was not his first published work. During his years at Harvard, Everett and eight others established a literary journal called the Harvard Lyceum. Though insufficient public support ended the youthful adventure soon after its initiation, the literary journal established a precedent in college journalism.[40]

Everett worked extremely hard on this theological study, thoroughly researching the sources and citations of English's book. Because it was highly scholarly and esoteric, it had little impact on the popular mind. As one friend commented after its publication, it was a work "more learned than popular, less adopted to general instruction...it will produce, I am confident, a incalculable benefit...."[41] Nevertheless, Everett was satisfied with his first scholarly offering. Writing to his brother Alexander some years later, he admitted

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[39]Moses Stuart to Edward Everett, 14 October 1813, EEP.

[40]Everett, "Autobiography," 6:9-10, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 8; Morison, Three Centuries at Harvard, 202.

[41]Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 25-26; A. van der Kemp to Edward Everett, 3 April 1815, EEP.

that many sections could be improved and that he had indulged "in some very gringling language." But "as to the opinions advanced, as I held them at that time I expressed them I have nothing to reproach myself with on that score,"[42] he concluded.

Everett's interests, however, were not confined to theology. The country was at war with England. The war was never really popular in Boston, though Harvard students, in the summer of 1812, conducted drills on Boston Common and State Street "amid the 'repeated and enthusiastic huzzas' of the citizenry."[43] Everett made no mention of such affairs, but at fifty-six he believed that America had justification to go to war with either England or France, as at least one thousand ships had been captured under the Orders of Council and some thousand American seamen had been impressed into the British Navy.[44]

By 1814, however, the partial support for the war had shifted to open opposition in New England. In his sermon on the nature of patriotism, given April 8, 1814, Everett said that patriotism was more than mere love of

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[42]Edward Everett to Alexander Everett, 5 January 1816, EEP.

[43]Morison, Three Centuries at Harvard, pp. 214-215.

[44]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 27.

country in the days of misfortune. "Enlightened patriotism," he said, is an attachment which "silent perhaps in praise," is "active in schemes of public usefullness." Enlightened patriotism, "if it sees faults of danger sees them only to correct and succour." It was only enlightened patriotism which could bring forth virtuous men who speak truths and "serve an unsensible, or unthankful or unprosperous country with affection, patience, and zeal."[45]

Up to this stage in Everett's life there is little to suggest that he had an interest in politics. Though his social environment and value system had more in common with aristocratic England than revolutionary France, this brief reference to patriotism reflected more of Everett's particular psychological temper than a political position. Nowhere in this sermon is there mention of the war. Theological moderation was its keynote. A patriotism manifested by an extreme contempt for other nations was similar to the "hardness of heart which private success creates." Both were the results of the same unbalanced mind. This extreme approach, he warned, leads the private man "to neglect his benevolent and social duties, and acts of private injury, /while/ -- in the nation it produces a disregard of the rights and

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[45]Everett, "Sermons," 8 April 1814, EEP, vol. 239.

insensibility to the claims of other nations."[46]

In the middle of November, 1814, during a visit to Washington, Everett's "patriotism" received a real shock. Only three and one-half months had passed since four thousand British troops under the command of General Robert Ross, had burned the Capitol and then escaped to Baltimore. Arriving at Washington on the sixteenth, Everett sent a letter to his brother Alexander, by now a constant writing companion. In great detail he described the destruction which had been wrought at the hands of the British; a national shame, he thought, having the capitol city burned and allowing the attackers to escape unmolested. "The spectacle of the ruins is melancholy," he wrote describing the capitol buildings.[47]

This scene of bleakness extended beyond the burned-out walls of Congress. Rufus King told Everett "that he was on the stage of the revolutionary war, but never saw so dark an hour as this." This sense of despair was also evident to Everett in the attitudes of the young War Hawks who had pushed through the declaration

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Edward Everett to Alexander Everett, 16 November 1814, EEP. It is almost always implied that a nationalist is a patriot. Hans Kohn's study on the Idea of Nationalism, for example, traces the transformation from patriotism to nationalism as it manifests in the evolution of the collective conscious. The stages of individual development from patriotism to nationalism parallel the stages of the collective.

of war. Men like Henry Clay, who two years ago had "told Quincy that he was not worthy of the carpet he trod upon," were now "silent, sullen, and humble." As for the minority, they were "disgusted and grieved." "I never knew what political anxiety was till I saw it here," Everett informed Alexander.[48]

Even meeting with President Madison did not reassure Everett. The President, clad in "rusty black and surmounted by a head strewed with powder" with a bandage tied over the round face, distorted from recent mouth surgery, seemed to him "a very diminutive, unpromising figure."[49]

Nevertheless the visit to Washington was informative, and Everett had a chance to meet the nation's representatives. Senators Rufus King, Jeremiah Mason, Christopher Gore, and Representative Daniel Webster resided where Everett had taken rooms. But it was the young representative from South Carolina, John C. Calhoun, who impressed Everett most. "His manner is rapid, his apprehension quick, his reply prompt, and his talents perhaps equal to any on the Democratic side of the House," he recorded

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[48]Edward Everett to Alexander Everett, 16 November 1814, Everett, "Autobiography," pp. 21-23, EEP.

[49]Edward Everett, "Visit to Washington," EEP, 123:52; Edward Everett to Alexander Everett, 26 November 1814, EEP.

in a diary entitled "Visit to Washington."[50]

On January 12, 1815, Everett made his first public remarks respecting the war. A country involved in war, he said, was involved in an "unnatural and convulsive" course, which was uncongenial to happiness. "We are visited with the judgment of war, which exhausts the resources, and checks the growth; obstructs the industry, and effects the comfort of a people, alike whether just or unjust, successful or unsuccessful."

> The useful, the honorable, the virtuous, the really glorious duties of life are performed, without zeal without spirit. Improvements are slowly and reluctantly admitted; society creeps along in a tardy pace, and we almost trust to chance for everything, that belongs to the ornament and dignity of public character.

And as war subverted the natural course of a nation's energy, it also created "unhappy effects upon the moral habits of a people." War excited the unkind and hostile passions of man and substituted "pernicious maxims of conduct" by producing an atmosphere of "impurity and

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[50]Edward Everett, "Visit to Washington," EEP, 123:45. Years later, after personally experiencing the wrath of Calhoun, Everett modified his opinion of the man. In 1850 he wrote, the election of Calhoun by South Carolina in 1811 was "for the express purpose of declaring war with England as the only measure which would avert the impending danger. A policy of this kind will be very apt to prevail in popular government when a political party is in danger of losing its ascendency." Everett, "Autobiography," p:24.

depravity" for those maxims basic to the proper growth of the character. No one, concluded Everett, gained from this war; neither England nor the United States. Both nations had the power to turn the "desert into a garden, the solitary wilderness into a home! - to change the face of half a continent." Instead, havoc in all its forms was raging; "blood is poured forth like water on the ground, and thousands of unexpecting unaccountable souls are ushered unprepared into eternity!"

Men must not cloud their minds to the evil of war nor allow the sound of martial music to drown out the cry of war's victims, he expounded dramatically. To judge a war, Everett warned,

> We must behold it, not in the fair and splendid array of Peace, in the Imposing pomp of martial Processions, in the inspiration of Musick, and the glitter of arms; - but we should follow these preparations to their object. - The noble Musick, that breaths a soul into the dullest bosom, is designed but to drown the cries of the wounded and dying - these bright and polished arms are to be stained in human blood-this fair array is Marshalled for destruction. - There is something sublime in the character of the hero; - but what recompense does it afford for the boundless and countless woes, that follow in the train of his conquests.[51]

Though in this sermon Everett never attacked the policy of the national government his position against the war

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[51]Everett, "Sermons," January, 1815, EEP, vol. 242; See also, Everett, "Sermons," 19 February, 1815, EEP, vol. 242.

was clear. Though covered in the garb of humanism this position was most likely influenced by the events which had occurred since April, 1814 when he first mentioned patriotism. The destruction he witnessed in the capitol, the growing hostility among Madison's critics, and Everett's close relationship with this latter group, all played a role in shaping this position.

Shortly after his return from Washington, the Corporation and Overseers of Harvard University, in recognition of his achievements, invited him to assume the position of Professor of Greek Literature. The invitation was made especially tempting by the additional offer to allow him to spend two years of study in Europe at the University of Göttingen.[52] There can be little doubt that this factor added greatly to the decision. Since his senior year at Harvard, with the aid of his friend Moses Stuart, whom he met at an auction of Buckminster's library in 1810, Everett had begun the study of German. Among the letters between the two, the name of Professor Eichhorn often appeared; for it was his work, An Introduction To the Old Testament, that the two had chosen to translate. Eichhorn at this time held the chair of Moral Philosophy at the German University. These two years abroad would provide Everett the opportunity to

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[52]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 10.

study under the great man.[53] Furthermore, his close advisor Joseph Buckminster, during his travels in Europe in 1806-1807, had been impressed by German achievements in theology and awakened in Everett an interest to study there. In addition, during these years, Harvard welcomed the influx of German works which seemed consistent with their rationalist approach.[54]

The Society at Brattle Street was distressed when it learned that its young minister would accept the offer of the Harvard Corporation. Nevertheless, the church could hardly demand that Everett stay. On April 12, 1815, with full procession, in the presence of the College Boards and the lieutenant governor, Edward Everett was inaugurated as the first Eliot Professor of Greek Literature.[55] Four days later on April 16th Everett,

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[53]Everett, "Autobiography," p. 18, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 9; Moses Stuart to Edward Everett, 24 June 1813, 16 March 1813, 9 July 1813, EEP; Cynthia Stokes Brown, "Discovery of the German University, Four Students at Göttingen, 1815-1822" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1964), pp. 34-35.

[54]Everett, "Autobiography," 6:9-10,22, Paul Luinin to Edward Everett, 18 April 1812. This letter introduced Luinin of Göttingen to Everett. Luinin was writing concerning the school at Cambridge and said he would be glad to answer questions about Gottingen. Brown, "Four Students," pp. 13.17,23-28; Reginald Phelps, "The Idea of the Modern University-Gottingen and America," Germanic Review 29 (October 1954):184-186.

[55]Records of the Church at Brattle Square, p. 59; Records of the Overseers, 12 April 1815, 6:120-122; Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 10-11.

now twenty years of age, set sail for Europe on the second ship to leave Boston since the conclusion of the treaty of peace.

CHAPTER III

THE EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

Accompanying Everett on board the ship New Packet in the spring of 1815 were the young lawyer and Latin tutor, Joseph Cogswell, and Everett's friend and fellow faculty member, George Ticknor. These three represented the first young Americans to seek advanced degrees in Europe since the Revolution. Each carried with him those important letters of introduction necessary for the proper social contacts.[1] Everett also carried with him a commitment from the Corporation of Harvard: $1,200 per year plus an annual loan of $800. All that was asked in return was that he study and purchase books

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[1]Jean Cheverus to Edward Everett, 14 April 1815, Sir Humphrey Davis to Edward Everett, 22 June 1815, E. Schwabe to Edward Everett, 25 June, 1815, EEP; Henry A. Pochmann, German Culture in America, 1600-1900 (University of Wisconsin, 1957), pp. 66, 70, David Tyack, George Ticknor and the Boston Brahmins (Cambridge, 1967), Russell Nye, George Bancroft (New York, 1964).

for the college library while abroad.[2]

Everett, now twenty, spent the next four years of his life in Europe. Much of his time was devoted to his studies, but a good deal of it was spent traveling extensively throughout the continent.[3] He wrote nine diaries during these travels, and each is rich with detailed observations of the countryside and urban centers, as well as the common people and public men of the times. In addition the diaries contain the first comprehensive record of Everett's life and insight into his character.

The first thing with which we are struck when reading these diaries is the meticulous detail of the daily recordings. Paul Revere Frothingham in his study of

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[2]Everett was given $500 for miscellaneous books and authorized $6,000 for purchase of Professor Ebeling's Library. in 1817 President Kirkland asked Everett to keep an eye opened for "suitable gentlemen, who shall be eminently qualified to assist students in the philological department, to come to this country with a view to his being connected with the University." President Kirkland to Everett, 23 October 1817, Records of the Overseers, vol. 6; President Kirkland to J. Davis, 5 February 1816, 2 May 1816, J. Davis to Everett, 23 November 1816, Harvard College Papers (1815-1819), vol.8; President Kirkland to Everett, 12 November 1819, College Papers (1819-1821), vol. 9; Everett to Messrs. Pitcairn & Brodie Co., 24 December 1817, EEP.

[3]Everett traveled through England, Italy, Greece, Germany, Scotland, Holland, France and kept "Diaries" for each trip. These are to be found in vols. 124, 125, 127-129, 131-134, EEP.

Edward Everett noted that during the period when Everett was preparing his Defence, his constant activity prompted the nickname "Ever-at-it."[4] This record of his four-year journey also mirrors a matured and confident temper, one which would not be overwhelmed by the old world. A letter to his brother Alexander clearly demonstrates this characteristic. "I have a tolerably bad opinion of Bonaparte and his system of aggrandizing himself," he wrote in February, 1817,

> but I do not think anything he ever did half so inequitable as the measures of theVienna Congress in taking the balance into their hands and weighing the kingdoms out, and dividing them among the Medes and Persians; and the absurdity of England, who calls herself the champion of right, of her espousing the cause of the German princes, against their subjects,--of her lending the strong arm of her wealth to bind tighter the chains of the feudal system, and to keep back the continent where it was four hundred years ago,--this is marvellous. ...--an elevation of an ignorant peasantry to the rights of humanity--might be a dangerous thing, but there would be no danger in taxing the nobility, opening the first offices of state to the untitled, feeding God's plain handiwork with wholesome fare, and taking, at last, plain man, as heaven made him, into favor. However, whether this can or cannot be done, is no business of England, one way or the other, to prevent; but it is much her duty not to put herself in the Saxon peasants' eating his bread in peace. What need has England to come here? Is there not India and Ceylon and the further isles, and Ireland for her to oppress?[5]

This comment was Everett's strongest remark concerning England.

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[4]Frothingham, Everett, p. 55.

[5]Everett to Alexander Everett, 16 February 1817; "Visit to England," 23 June 1815, 124:82-83, EEP.

The diaries also show a young man who was often so serious, so aloof, that his behavior bordered at times on outright snobbishness. His visit to Kings Theater prompted this comment, "in every form [it is] the theatre of the aristocracy--the most indecent as well as revolting exhibition, it has been my lot to see, and equalled only, in its outrage upon publick decency, by the dress of half the ladies in the boxes." Concerning the behavior of some at Göttingen, he wrote,

> The dancing was about two-thirds waltzing, in a style for swiftness and duration to me incomprehensible. A couple would pass many times round a hall more than a hundred feet long, and with extreme rapidity. The dance is beyond question indecent and can never exist except in a barbarous or corrupt society; or in one that chooses to enjoy the license of the latter, under the pretence of the simplicity of the more former.[6]

Everett's reactions to these and many other events show how well the denial of extremes, especially emotional ones, was inculcated in him. To his brother Alexander, he told of the "shocking" practice among men, women, and children of swearing. "The degree to which they carry it is extreme. Herr Gott, Herr Jesus, O du lieber Gott, are words for every sentence." He was especially dismayed when meeting a young German professor of Divinity who soon expressed the phrase "Gott im Himmel."[7]

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[6]"England," 10 June 1815, 124:64, "Amsterdam and Göttingen, 1815-1816," 26 June 1815, EEP, 125:39.

[7]Everett to Alexander Everett, 22 October 1815,

But all of Everett's European experiences did not produce a negative response. There were aspects of European life with which Everett had an affinity. In England, besides the visits to Covent Gardens, the Royal Academy, the Antiquarian Society, Westminster Abbey and the House of Commons, there were meetings with the important public figures of the times, especially those in the world of scholarship. He met with Lord Byron from whom he received his first lesson in the Jacobinism of the time. Byron said to Everett, "I trust to live to see his /Lord Castlereagh's/ head upon a pike yet...." On November 16, 1816, he visited with the aging Goethe.

> He was very stiff and cold, not to say gauche and awkward. His head was grey, some of his front teeth gone, and his eyes watery with age. He was oppressed at feeling that we were gazing at him, looked restlessly out of the window, at which he sat, and talked low and anxiously. He spoke of Byron, and admired the Corsair, he described the English eloquence to the influence of parliamentary speaking, and asked a few questions about America. He spoke however with no interest, on any thing.

There were also meetings with men of great power and influence: Lord Salisbury, Sir Charles Blagdon, Lord Erskin, Wilberforce, Roscoe I. Smith, Sir Walter Scott, Muchtar Pasha, Ali Pasha, von Humboldt, Lucien Bonaparte, and the Americans, Henry Clay and John Quincy

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EEP; Everett to George Bancroft, 18 May 1818, George Bancroft Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited at GBP); See also, "Göttingen, Dresden and Berlin," 127:16, Everett to Alexander Everett, 5 January 1816, EEP.

Adams.[8] Though he at first tried to remain aloof from political events of the day, hoping not to "betray my Americanism," by June 1815 he could no longer endure the silence, and when the topic moved to Jacobinism, he "took the liberty to express.../his/ opinion freely." Exactly what was said then was not recorded, but he recorded his seeming endorsement of the aristocratic position within society. "Though a Republican myself," he said to Lord Byron, "I thought there were advantages in a privileged order, that they were the sources of a patronage which could not otherwise exist;....I said I suppose if I lived in a country, where there was a nobility, I should wish to be a nobleman...."[9]

In many ways Everett was at home with this elite class and never seemed shy in its presence. If aristocrats might show some personal or national idiosyncracies, they were nevertheless committed to a valid cultural system. Perhaps the clearest indication of Everett's affinity with the whole of Europe's urbane, intellectual, cultural elite is found in his judgment of Rousseau's

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[8]"England," 9 June 1815, 124:62, 17 June 1815, 124:75, "Journey from Göttingen to Dresden," vol. 127, "Journey to England, Scotland and Ireland, 6 July 1818, 132:381-383, 365, "Journey to Italy and Greece," 10 April 1819," vol. 135, "Journey to England," 131:63-65, Everett to Alexander Everett 16 November 1816, 4 April 1816, 8 January 1819, EEP.

[9]"England," 12 May 1815, 19 June 1815, 17 June 1815, 124:16, 78, 84, EEP.

"state of Nature" as compared to a state of culture. Man is in a state of nature, thought Everett,

> Only when in the highest possible exercise of all his natural faculties physical, intellectual, and moral and instead of calling the lowest condition in which he exists, a state of nature, we should give that title to the highest.--The nature of man is not to be a hunting, fishing, starving, blood-thirsty beast; but a rational, learned, social, cultivated, tender spirit.... It is not the natural state of a curious human machine, to be left where chance has thrown it, to rust and perish; but to be applied to its peculiar end, to be cleaned, and kept in order.[10]

The University at Göttingen had a noticeable influence on the young Harvard professor. When Ticknor and he arrived at Göttingen in 1815, it had been just twenty-one months since the French army had left. The post-war experience at the University proved to be arduous as students who were returning from the war tended to "be boisterous and self-confident," though poor housing conditions proved the basis for most of the tension.[11] Everett recorded his first impression of the community of Göttingen in his diary.

> Göttingen had previously been a fortress, and in some places the remains of the walls and trenches are to be seen. I have supposed one or two stone houses, stand by the Rampart, to have been originally

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[10]"England, Scotland and Ireland, 1818," 132, 231, EEP. Emphasis mine.

[11]Brown, "Four Students," p. 227.

> towers in the wall, and some other buildings wear the appearance of having been built from its materials. The city is seen at first view, to be neither new nor neat. The mode so prevalent, in Germany, of building the skeleton of a house with tinkers, and plastering up the intervals, carries an air not only of slovenliness, but of insecurity and exposure to the weather.[12]

During the first half year, Everett and Ticknor lived in town and had dinner brought from an eating house. The last year and a half, Everett resided in the house of Professor Bouterwek, where his accommodations were very "commodious." At first glance, Everett was not overly impressed with either the city or the students he encountered, referring to the latter as "grotesque." Later in 1818, he advised George Bancroft not to be very "forward to make acquaintances among the students whose character you do not know. They are apt to be quarrelsome."[13]

But Everett chose the university, not for its social life, but because of the presence of Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, Professor of Moral Philosophy. Everett spent fourteen to sixteen hours a day on the study of classical literature and philosophy and met privately with Eichhorn to study Hebrew and German literature. Eichhorn's theological view was basically secular. The Old Testament was not to be considered as a divine revelation nor the

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[12] "Amsterdam and Göttingen, 1815-1816," EEP, 125:9.

[13] Ibid., Everett to Bancroft, 18 May 1819, GBP.

foundation of Christian doctrine. Rather, it was to be valued as an ancient source of history liable to all the tests applied to any historical document. Writing to Bancroft in 1818, Everett still was impressed with Eichhorn's intellectual ability, but seemed dismayed by the Professor's classroom delivery. "Mr. Eichhorn," wrote Everett, "unfortunately has adopted a style of lecturing, little adopted to the seriousness of the subject--unworthy of his own character as an aged and learned man--and irrevent as regards the great topics in discussion. He not seldom descends to mere buffoonery...."[14]

If Everett came to Göttingen to listen and learn from Eichhorn, he came prepared to discriminate between what was valid and invalid, a characteristic of his well-trained, mature and confident mind. To George Bancroft, whose plan to study at Göttingen had created some apprehension, he wrote, the Corporation "need not be frightened in that score. You will certainly be able to distinguish between what is to be held to and what rejected, in their systems and not let your head be turned, like those of the weaker brethren."[15]

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[14]Everett to Bancroft, 13 August 1818, GBP, "Amsterdam and Göttingen," EEP; 125:34, Brown, "Four Students," pp. 94-95.

[15]Everett to Bancroft, 23 August 1819, GBP; Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 11; Everett to Alexander Everett 2 October 1815, EEP; Brown, "Four Students," pp. 76-77, 115.

During these two years at Göttingen, Everett's "proper" psychological disposition and intellectual judgment of the rationalist's analytical approach to reality were strongly reinforced. Here the scholarly traditions of cosmopolitan sophistication, persistence, and discipline were pervasive. Göttingen's disciplined scholarly approach was anything but anathama to Everett's own assumptions about the means of attaining truth. His own work on the Defence of Christianity mustered all the critical scholarship at his command, an approach which was in the Göttingen tradition. Faculty like Professors Dissen, Benecke, and Müller cherished solid, "footnoted scholarship and abhorred speculation, abstractions, and mysticism,"[16] values which easily fit into Everett's own world view.

The spirit of historical analysis which pervaded the University further influenced the young Bostonian. In November 1815, he informed his brother of his grandiose plans to write a major historical work. For him history seemed to resolve the problem of combining various disciplines to produce a valuable piece of work. A history, he wrote, seemed the most worthy, "being a union of research and speculation and affording scope to a good deal of practical philosophy." Among the

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[16]Brown, "Four Students," pp. 38, 131-132, 187. The question of mysticism in Everett's ideology is discussed in greater detail in chapter IV.

possibilities for a history was one of America, the Church, or the Jews.[17] Though these potential histories never became a reality, Everett's future philosophical conclusions rested strongly upon the historical approach which Göttingen inculcated.

Along with this experience of Göttingen Everett's association with the literary critics and scholars of both Germany and England provided him with an additional education. Since the greatest percentage of hostile comments concerning the low level of American literature came from the English critics of the Edinburgh Review, Everett took special pleasure in reporting how the Germans treated English literature as inferior, an opinion with which he agreed.[18] Perhaps he hoped this diminution of England's literary position would relieve the sting. But he certainly recognized the great achievements of both these countries, as well as America's inferior place. "Our literary is like our physical climate," he wrote Robert Walsh Esq., in December, 1817. "We can produce neither good ripe grapes nor good ripe books." To Willard Phillips he commented, "the real

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[17]Everett to Alexander Everett, 11 November 1815, EEP.

[18]Everett to Theodore Lyman, Jun. Esq., 1 March 1816, "England, Scotland andIreland," 7 July 1818, 14 July 1818, EEP, 132: 367-369; Everett to Willard Phillips, 5 June 1818, Willard Phillips Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as WPP).

reason why our literature is little known in England is, that we have little worth knowing."[19]

For Everett there was much to be learned, therefore, from the German literary experience. To Robert Walsh, who was publishing a journal in Philadelphia, he advised the creation of a national literary journal. This should not be located in New England, he warned, for this area shared all the intellectual divisions which made unified intellectual effort impossible. He suggested that perhaps Philadelphia might be best with Walsh's journal serving this function.

> I had intended, on my return, to try to get up a literary journal, but I am not sure the course would not be better served by throwing my mite into yours. I should ever be glad to see a commencement of literary intercourse between the different sections of the land. Our few literary embers go out for want of being kindly gathered, and the country dies daily,--as the apostles say,--for want of a metropolis.[20]

Certainly Everett desired to have America emulate the cultural achievements he had witnessed in Europe. With the spirit of nationalism apparent throughout all aspects of European culture, Everett during these years came to the conclusion that only by creating similar national institutions could such heights be attained in America. Both the English and German university systems,

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[19]Everett to Phillips, 5 June 1818, WPP; Everett to R. Walsh Esq., 28 December 1817, EEP.

[20]Everett to R. Walsh, 28 December 1817, EEP.

for example, impressed Everett. When first arriving in Europe, he wrote to Alexander recommending that very little be done about establishing an American National University. He felt it would not occur at any rate and such an institution would have a deleterious effect upon the older colleges. But by 1820 he had changed his view. In an article on the American University, written that year in the North American Review, he advanced his position as a fervent advocate of national universities.[21] In addition, Everett's concern for the development of national institutions of literature and scholarship reflected his own intimate connection with these. With individual scholarly and literary efforts identified with the cultural achievements of the nation, Everett's worth and future became inexorably attached to the value and destiny of these national institutions.

Everett was aware that his stay in Europe had stirred in him a strong nationalist feeling. In one of his early essays for the North American Review dealing with Washington Irving's Bracebridge Hall, Everett noted that his presence in England did not obliterate the emotional ties he had for his native land. "On the

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[21]Everett to Alexander Everett, 16 June 1816, 1 December 1816, EEP; Edward Everett, "American University," North American Review 10 (1820): 20-42; Brown, "Four Students," p. 259.

contrary," he wrote,

> you must first go abroad to experience in all their power the emotions, which belong to an American at the contemplation of his native land. They are deeper, and warmer, and dearer beyond the sea. You feel, for the first time, the whole weight of this lengthening chain.--The names of Plymouth, of Lexington, of Washington, of America must come up to the memory of one of her sons beyond the Atlantic and the Alps, before he knows all that they mean all that they say.[22]

The experience of nationalism, with its focus on tradition and heritage also moved Everett to seek a cultural past with which to identify. If Everett's English counterparts might relish the cultural failures on the part of the young nation, he nevertheless took pride in the achievements of his English ancestors. In fact, it was this notion of ancestry which tempered some of his feelings of inferiority. Where the English might look upon young American scholars as foreigners coming to pay tribute "of admiration to Shakespeare and Milton, to authors not our countrymen," Everett saw himself returning to the birthplace of his own ancestors. "Whose countrymen are they, if not of those, who fled from England for consciences sake," he asked rhetorically.[23]

This association with the cultural past of England served two functions, therefore. First, Everett identified

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[22]Edward Everett, "Bracebridge Hall," North American Review 15 (June, 1822): 214-215.

[23]"England 1818," EEP, 131:55.

with a national cultural heritage which all men of scholarship accepted as worthy. Secondly, it served as a point of departure for American literature. Once American scholarship understood its roots, its historic tradition, it could chart its future. Thus, writing to Willard Phillips in June, 1818, Everett measured America's literary position somewhat strangely, the result, most likely, of his new and confused ideas. A country's literary character, he said, "is not soley to be judged, by what books she writes, but by what she reads. The stream of English literature flows full through our land: and that nation need not be ashamed of its literary taste, that reads and relishes Shakespeare and Milton, Hume and Burke...."[24] Though the Edinburgh School of literary criticism diminished America's cultural past, Everett was optimistic about its future now that the problem had been discerned. America had fallen into a condition of mediocrity because she had no "standard to look up to." He was himself the standard of others and foolishly ceasing to compare himself with the great men abroad, he allowed the"fatal atmosphere of mediocrity to steal upon his senses and lax him to sleep."[25]

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[24]Everett to Phillips, 5 June 1818, WWP.

[25]"Scotland and Italy," 21 July 1818, 133:1, Everett to Alexander Everett, 18 October 1816, EEP.

In October, 1819, Everett set sail for Boston and the Professorship at Harvard. Shortly before his departure from Göttingen in 1817, he had requested a Doctoral degree which he received without examination or disputation. This sort of "honorary degree" was granted due to his position of Professor held upon his admission into Göttingen. With the receipt of this "degree," Edward Everett became the first American to be so honored.[26]

During these four years, he had impressed the European intellectuals. Professor Eichhorn informed Bancroft, some time in September of 1818, that he had the "highest" regard for Everett, and that he would "be held as a wonder in his field in America" and Dissen told him that he "loved Everett from the heart."[27] But perhaps the greatest tribute paid to Everett and Ticknor came from their friend Cogswell. Writing to Stephen Higginson, Jr. in March 1817, he said:

> I must tell you something of our colony at Göttingen before I discuss other subjects, for you probably care little about the University and its host of professors except as they operate upon us. First as to the Prof. Everett and Dr. Tichnor as they are called here everybody knows them in this part of Germany and also knows how to value time; for once in my life I am proud to acknowledge myself an American on the European

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[26] Brown, "Four Students," p. 182; Everett to Bancroft, 22 December 1818, GBP.

[27] Bancroft, "Journal," 13 September 1818, pp. 4-5, Bancroft to Everett 20 February 1819, GBP; Brown, "Four Students," p. 177.

side of the Atlantic, never was a country more fortunate in its representation abroad than ours has been in this instance, they will gain more for us in this respect than even in the treasures of learning they will carry back. Little as I have of patriotism, I delight to listen to the character which is here given of my countrymen, I mean as countrymen, and not as my particular friends, the dispondency which it produces in my own mind of ever obtaining a place by their sides is more than counter-balanced by the gratification of my national feelings, to say not a word of my individual attachment. You must not think me extravagant but I venture to say that the notions which the European literati have entertained of America will be essentially changed by G & E's residence on the continent; we were known to be a brave a rich and an enterprising people, but that a scholar was to be found among us, or any man who had a desire to be a scholar had scarcely been conceived. It will also be the means of producing new correspondences and connections between the learned men of the American and European side of the Atlantic and so read much more widely among us a knowledge of their present literature and science of this continent.[28]

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[28]Joseph Cogswell to Stephen Higginson, 8 March, 1817, Joseph Cogswell Papers, New York Public Library (hereafter cited as JCP).

CHAPTER IV

THE NATIONALISM OF YOUTH

The young professor who arrived home at the end of 1820 possessed a clear vision of his country's future and his particular role in its destiny. He carried back to America that spirit of nationalism which had affected many institutions of nineteenth-century European culture. In a letter to his brother Alexander dated August, 1816, he spoke of his leadership qualities for shaping and defining his nation's institutions.

> When my sphere of influence was confined to a circle of shoemakers' and butchers' sons, who met together moonlight evenings to play hoop at Clap's Corner, and if I succeeded in having it driven to the great pond, when others would drive it to Butler's brook, it was a great thing. I did not then look to heading my ragamuffins at a Boston grammar school, my yet raggier muffins at Harvard College; and a year or two afterwards I begin to write reviews of Scott and translations of Eichhorn, - this again seemed to me as natural, as if I had done it my life long. And so it has been in the different places since. You have also gone through the same course, and perhaps had the same feelings, and now that it seems as natural to me to think and talk of National improvements, as it did once of driving the hoop to the great pond, I have no doubt we shall be able to effect them.

Some years later, he expressed his special role before a gathering of the Society of Phi Beta Kappa.

> Yes, brethren, it is by the intellect of the country that the mighty mass is to be inspired; that its parts are to communicate and sympathize with each other; its natural progress to be adorned with becoming refinements; its principles asserted and its feelings interpreted to its own children, to other regions, and to after ages.[1]

During the next five years, Everett's life became more closely linked to the developing national institutions. As this occurred Everett's ideology of nationalism emerged. The symbols chosen by each individual to convey the meaning of nationalism reflect the nature of the symbol-maker.[2] Everett himself was the product of a particular world-view which reflected a particular temper. He was a trained intellectual and organized the world around him in intellectual terms. He was a scholar and a theologian as well, and often adopted the symbols of their reality; abstract, metaphysical and at times mystical. But he was also a Bostonian and a member, by his intimate and successful association with their institutions, of the Brahmin class. All this had a bearing upon the symbols chosen for his nationalist ideology.

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[1]Everett to Alexander Everett, 10 August 1816, EEP; Everett "On the Conditions Favorable to the Establishment of Literature in America," 26 August 1824, Orations, 1:42.

[2]Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (New York, 1944), pp. 3-18.

During his stay in Europe, Everett was impressed by and endorsed the development of national literary movements. Thus upon his return, he was asked by the proprietors of the North American Review, a "languishing journal" with a subscription list of under six hundred, to assume the editorship.[3] That same year Sydney Smith, the brilliant and popular British liberal divine and critic, stimulated discussion of American national literature with his article in the Edinburgh Review. He confessed that the Americans "are a brave, industrious, and acute people; but they have hitherto given no indication of genius...."

> They are but a recent offset indeed from England: and they should make it their chief boast for many generations to come that they are sprung from the same race with Bacon, Shakespeare, and Newton. Considering the numbers, indeed, and the favorable circumstances in which they have been placed, they have yet done marvelously little to assert the honor of such descent.[4]

The essence of Smith's comments centered on the present state and future of American literature, and, in particular, if America was to follow in the footsteps of established European traditions of taste or create a new and distinct

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[3]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 20, Everett to Hon J. McLean, 7 October 1828, vol. 63, EEP.

[4]Hans Kohn, American Nationalism, An Interpretative Essay (New York, 1956), p. 61.

kind.[5]

This view was not new to Everett. He had already encountered similar expressions in England and had developed arguments to counter the assertion. Appearing before the members of his old congregation at Brattle Square on October 22, 1819, Everett proclaimed his evolutionary connection with the tradition and heritage of his English forefathers: Burke, Bacon, Newton, Locke, and Shakespeare could inspire pride in America as well as in Britain. Their grandchildren and great grandchildren living in America had a right to the pride commensurate with their achievement and this could not be denied.[6] We have the right, he wrote in the North American Review in July 1820, to call the greatest masters of English literature our countrymen.[7]

This attempt to root America in the historic development of English literature not only is an example of the national inferiority present at this stage of national growth but demonstrates the absence of a clear concept of an American kind. The United States, so

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[5]Ibid.; Robert Streeter, "Cultural Thought in the North American Review, 1815-1865," (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, April, 1943), p. 148.

[6]Everett, "Sermons," 22 October 1819, EEP, vol. 242.

[7]Edward Everett, "Letters from Geneva and France," North American Review 11 (July, 1820) :24-25; See also: Edward Everett, "England and America," North American Review 13 (July, 1821): 36, 40-41, Edward Everett, "Faux's in America, North American Review,19 (July, 1824): 120-123.

young within the family of nations, possessed a national history of only forty-five years. Its members shared no common descent, for by 1800 though predominently Anglo-American and of British stock, America contained "that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country." Furthermore, the nation lacked the emotional and intellectual cement of a common religion as Protestantism had disintegrated into a host of competing sects. Nor was there a common cultural past.[8] Because America lacked these traditional categories of identification, the creation of a national symbology was complicated.

The period commencing after the war with England brought a flury of nationalist activity, though strong sectionalist interests were evident as well.[9] The election of James Monroe, the call of Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun for a network of internal improvements under the name "American System," the ascendency of the nationalist John Marshall in the Supreme Court, and finally, the appointment of John Quincy Adams as Secretary of State, nevertheless, reflected an awakened nationalist mood. Therefore, Everett's own nationalist ideology was timely.

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[8]Kohn, Idea of Nationalism, pp. 269, 275, 278, 667, American Nationalism, p. 15.

[9]George Dangerfield, The Awakening of American Nationalism (New York, 1965), The Era of Good Feelings (New York, 1952).

Everett's identification with historic England was conceived outside the framework of recent political events and reflected his scholarly condition. It functioned within the larger historical universe of cultural and national character. This focus was clearly evident in his essay on the possible commonality of North and South Americans. Those who sought unity between peoples around a common revolutionary experience, wrote Everett, were overlooking the significant test of cultural affinity. We must distinguish between the act of independence from foreign domination and the substance of liberty, which is social liberty or individual independence present in the classes of society. This cultural achievement, he noted, could not be the product of a single political act. Rather, it was the result of a national character developed over many generations. "How can our thrifty regular merchants sympathize with a people, who send the letter post down the river, on the back of a swimmer," he asked. How can "our industrious frugal yeomen sympathize with a people that sit on horseback to fish? How can our mild and merciful people, who went through revolution without shedding a drop of civil blood, sympathize with a people that are hanging and shooting each other in their streets, with every fluctuation of their ill organized and exasperated factions?"

It was obvious to him why positive elements of national character were either present or absent. Where our national elements came from England, theirs came from Spain and Portugal: "the nations of Europe, that have sunk most into arrears, in the great account of humanity, and who have been labouring with causes of degeneracy too powerful and too active at home, to allow them to send out any life and character to their distant provinces." Without the import of these elements from the mother country, one could not expect proper development. One could hardly expect them to develop in the South. It was a simple maxim, well-established throughout history, "that none but the temperate climates, and the climates which produce and retain the European complexion of the skin in its various shades, admit of the highest degrees of national character."[10]

"We, in North America," wrote Everett,

> succeeded in achieving our political independence, because we had already the social and civil liberty, which is its best foundation. But had population of these colonies consisted of a corrupt and mixed race of various shades and sorts of men; had the feudal institutions, the seignories, and the services of the Gothic ages, divided the population into a wealthy aristocracy and a needy peasantry, not all our own provincial

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[10]Edward Everett, "The Revolutions of South America, North American Review 12 (April, 1820): 432-437.

> congresses, nor all the fleets and armies of Rochambeau and de Grasse, could have made us independent: nor if they could, would the independence have been worth having.

Nothing, not all the treaties we would sign, nor all the commissioners we could send, nor all the money we could provide could "transform Pueyrredons and their Artigases into Adamses or Franklins or their Bolivars into Washingtons."[11] It was closer in many ways, Everett remarked in his October sermon, either by ship or sympathy from New York to Europe than from New York to our "sister" states in South America. At the time of migration to America, England was the freest nation in the world and stands now second to our land which is the "most favored abode of happiness and liberty."[12]

One significant aspect of the remarks, besides its chauvanism, which reflected the national insecurity, and its challenges to hemispheric unity, was the portrayal of the character of Americans as "thrifty regular merchants" and "industrious frugal yeomen." This concept was the projection of the New England character upon the national group. Though the image of the "yeomen" was within the Jeffersonian-Crevecoeurian "tradition" dominant throughout

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[11] Ibid., pp. 433-34, 437.

[12] Everett, "Sermons," 22 October 1819, EEP, vol. 242.

American life, the addition of the adjectives "industrious" and "frugal," plus the phrase "thrifty regular merchants" points to a more regional source.

Of equal interest is the link Everett created between race, geography, and national character. Without the traditional factors of group identification and the unifying force of a common historical experience, the search for elements of cohesion led him to adopt these categories. While Everett's remarks concerned only the distinctions between the white and non-white races and temperate and non-temperate climates, these two elements played a most significant role in his nationalist ideology.

But Everett's major concern during the period of 1820-1825 was with the position and future of a national literature. The proclamation of racial superiority, the sharing in the glory of England's past, though comforting, did not fully meet the challenge of Sydney Smith and the Edinburgh critics. Could America only hope to mimic its more established European ancestors, or was there something unique in this new world which had the distinct shaping quality of religion, language, customs, or descent; something which would clearly produce an American mind and thus a distinct, national literature? "What our nation has been," Everett admitted in July, 1821,

> and in a good degree, what it is, are beyond our control. To our fathers' glory we contributed nothing; and our own institutions, at least in the old countries, do our wisdom and virtue no more credit than the beautiful architecture of a house built a hundred years before we were born, does our taste.[13]

Everett's search for the unique qualities which a national character demanded was not difficult. By the time he had returned to America certain general strains and themes in the ideology of nationalism were present. There was, of course, the powerful symbol of the garden. From Robert Beverley's early work on the History and Present State of Virginia, through Jefferson's Notes on Virginia and Lectures of 1783, and culminating in J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur's, Letters from an American Farmer, the uniqueness of the American environment was praised for its fundamental shaping quality. In addition, the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence had achieved their sacred position in the nation's mind. John Quincy Adams on July 4, 1821 mentioned that the Declaration "proved that the social compact was no figment of the imagination; but a real, solid, and sacred bond of the social union....It stands, and must forever stand alone, a beacon on the summit of the mountain."[14]

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[13]Everett, "England and America," p. 40.

[14]Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden (London, New York, 1964), pp. 73-144; Richard W. Van Alstyne, Genesis of American Nationalism (Waltham, Massachusetts, 1970), p. 114; The same general theme is found in Daniel Boorstin, The American, The Colonial Experience (New York, 1958);

Drawing from this body of thought and the symbols of his Boston culture, Everett set forth a theory of American literature. Offering his oration entitled "On the Conditions Favorable to the Establishment of Literature in America," to the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard in 1824, he demonstrated the significant role literature played in a culture and pointed out a source for a unique American character. Literature, said Everett, is the "more perfect" form in which man could communicate with man and mind with mind. Fashioned by the "creative powers of the mind," literature was the outward expression of our political institutions and reflected the "stage of social progress" the country had achieved. By linking the measure of political institutions to the "character of our intellectual pursuits," literature became the barometer of national progress. At the same time Everett's status within the country was enhanced due to his connection with the North American Review and Harvard College.

Since literature was a mirror of the mind, the national mind was the organizing principle of a national literature. Determining what directions the American

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Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York, 1956); Marvin Meyers, The Jacksonian Persuasion (New York, 1957). The question of the use of New England symbols to express national characteristics is dealt with in great length in Chapter VII.

mind would take, Everett said, was a complicated affair. Besides the unexpected "excitements" of the moment which influenced its direction, no precedent existed as a model. "Unrestrained by the direct power of government, but greatly influenced by public sentiment, throughout a vastly-extensive and highly-prosperous country, into which the civilization of older states has been rapidly transfused," none could predict which way the American mind would develop.[15]

Though Everett noted the geographical as well as the political qualities of the country it was the latter to which he now directed his full attention. Operating within the epistemological framework of Locke's tabula rasa, the product of his Harvard education, Everett pointed to America's unique political system as the source of a distinct and advanced national character. The American experience of free institutions was the first and only system,Everett said, under which numerous people had been permanently established over an extensive region.[16] This type of government could easily be defined as "a uniform and complete representative system, organized by a written constitution of government, and unaccompanied by a powerful hereditary element...." A definition, we might add, which clearly excluded the "older states"

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[15]Everett, "Literature in America," Orations, p. 40.

[16]Ibid., pp. 27-28.

of Europe. In this land, Everett asserted, "the whole direction of influence of affairs, and all the great organic functions of the body politic, are subjected, directly or indirectly, - the executive and legislative functions directly, - to the free popular choice."[17] Within a system of free institutions, of constitutional and representative government, not only had national social communication been achieved, but the highest quality of national mind would develop. Once the national government "is relieved from all the odium of internal administration, and the state governments are spared the conflicts of foreign politics," the country's growth would be limited only by its geography.[18]

None could deny that the American system of participatory government, a system which provided a universal and cheap education, whose practical operation demanded intellectual effort on the part of all throughout the land rather than a small circle, provided a prompter and wider circulation of thought; that this general raising of the character of the masses would produce new "varieties and peculiar power in the literature, which is but the voice and utterance of all this mental action."[19]

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[17] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[18] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[19] Ibid., pp. 18-19, 21.

> Such is the state of things existing in this country, and for the first time in the world, and for which we are indebted to the peculiar nature of our government, as a union of confederated republics. Its effect upon literature must eventually be, to give elevation, dignity, and generous expansion to every species of mental effort. A nationality at once liberal and great is the parent of great thoughts.[20]

This theory apparently contrasts sharply with Everett's earlier remarks on character or mind formation. If character was shaped by the political institutions, how could he deny a strong bond with the nationalities of South America? Surely the "newer" nations of the southern continent demonstrated their strong sympathy with the American system. Everett, when rejecting this notion, had argued that ancestry was the prime factor.[21] This confusion reflected his inability to resolve the central nationalist dilemma. Without a national past--thus lacking the historic cultural achievements of older states--Everett, in search for status, both for himself and his nation, identified with the Anglo-Saxon race. In searching for a national shaping factor or mystique, one that would produce a superior as well as a unique national mind and character, Everett like others before him, tied the American to the political system.[22]

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[20] Ibid., p. 28.

[21] See pages 76-78.

[22] Everett, "Letters from Geneva," p. 25; Ernst Nagal, The Idea of Union in American Thought, (London, 1964), p. 119. Nagal writes, "A Union indispensable and

What made the Union a powerful and dynamic shaping force was not its institutional and political framework alone. By 1820 the theological foundations of the "New England Way," the mystical and missionary elements of Calvinism and the rationalist's ideal liberty, had been woven into the nationalist ideology of Union. This fact plus the results of the successful geographical expansion of the Union had already transformed the Union into a metaphysical being with a unique spiritual past. By 1820 the chosen few had been transformed into a chosen nation. Standing before the elite of Unitarian Boston, Edward Everett also described the mystical past and divine destiny of the Union. When the new world was disclosed to mankind, it was more than a propitious moment, he began. For the first time, a country was made available in which to build the institution of liberty, "without sweeping away a gallant heraldry of Lords, or leading the descendants of a line of Kings to the scaffold...."[23] It cannot but be regarded, he said later at Harvard,

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irreplaceable had three concommitant qualities, of which one was a certainty that the American character required Union." Everett, "Literature in America," Orations, p. 32.

[23]Everett, "Sermons," 22 October 1819, EEP, vol. 242; Nagal, Idea of Union, pp. 33-34; Albert K. Weinberg, Manifest Destiny (Chicago, 1935), pp. 43-71; Kohn, American Nationalism, pp. 3-18; Perry Miller, "From Edward to Emerson," Errand into the Wilderness (Massachusetts, 1956), pp. 184-204; Bernard Bailyn, The Ideology of American Revolution (Massachusetts, 1967).

> as the plain interposition of Providence, that, at the critical period when the most powerful springs of improvement were in operation, a chosen company of Pilgrims, who were actuated by these springs of improvement, in all their strength, who had purchased the privilege of dissent at the high price of banishment from the civilized world, and who, with the dust of their feet, had shaken off many of the abuses and errors which had been accumulating for hundreds of years, came over to these distant and unoccupied shores. I know not that the work of thorough reform could be safely trusted to any different hands.[24]

Who in the world could challenge such uniqueness? Could a nation possess a more glorious past and future than to be the central manifestation of the Divine Plan? But the concept of any past, even spiritual, led Everett back to his Anglo-Saxon ancestry, which contrasted sharply with any notion of uniqueness. Thus Everett had to explain why those who left England were spiritually chosen and different from those who remained. He concluded in a truly Calvinistic framework. The fruits of their labor shall be the proof. The Union stood as evidence to all.

In his nationalism as in his theology, power was balanced with responsibility. "The attempt has been begun and is going on," he reminded the powerful of Boston, "far from foreign corruption - On the widest and broadest scale - and under the most benignant auspices and it now rests with us to show whether mankind can

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[24]Everett, "Literature in America," Orations, p. 59.

be trusted with their own property-their own government-their own Religion-Yea, with themselves."[25] As spiritual liberation was the ideal of the theological world liberty was its counterpart in the world of politics. Commenting on America's responsibility to "support" the Greek struggle of independence, he set forth his vision of America's mission. "In the great Lancastrial school of the nations," he wrote,

> liberty is the lesson, which we are appointed to teach. Masters we claim not, we wish not, to be, but the monitors we are of this noble doctrine. It is taught in our settlement, taught in our revolution, taught in our government; and the nations of the world are resolved to learn.... None could stop its tide....It will be taught and learned by all.
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> With the example before them of a free representative government-of a people governed by themselves,- it is no more possible that the nations will long bear any other, than that they should voluntarily dispense with the art of printing or the mariner's compass.[26]

The Union, which manifested the spirit of liberty was the last hope of man. In the United States the final drama would be played out-the test, the realization of man's hopes or humanity's demise. "...Here must these bright fancies be turned into truth; here must these high visions be realized, in which the seers and sages

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[25]Everett, "Sermons," 22 October 1819, EEP, vol. 242.

[26]Edward Everett, "Affairs in Greece," North American Review (October, 1823): 423-424.

of the elder world took refuge from the calamities of the days in which they lived. There are no more continents to be revealed; Atlantis hath arisen from the ocean; the farthest Thule is reached; there are no more retreats beyond the sea, no more discoveries, no more hopes." This country, founded by the Pilgrim fathers who were the victims of persecution and the apostles of liberty, was clearly the focus of man's hope. Our role, therefore, was more than responsibility, it was a sacred trust. All those in the past who lavished their treasures, who labored, fought, spilt their blood and perished were looking down upon this "last Experiment of humanity."[27] Writing for the North American Review in July 1821 Everett expressed it this way: "...the happiness of the civilized world essentially involved in the turn, which our institutions and character take."[28]

In 1824 Everett continued to demonstrate that he had adopted the shaping mystique of the political Union as the prime factor to explain America's unique national quality. That year the debate on the tariff began. Though the issue would eventually intensify sectional opposition in 1824 both Congressmen Daniel Webster, the pride of State Street, and Senator Robert Hayne of

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[27]Everett, "Sermons," 22 October 1819, EEP, vol. 242; Everett, "Literature in America," Orations, p. 40-42.

[28]Everett, "England and America," p. 42.

South Carolina supported the principle of free trade.[29] In late April Hayne, perhaps informed by Webster of Everett's sympathy with the anti-tariff cause, approached Everett for information to refute the tariff principle. By May 4, 1824, though Hayne informed him of the tariff's inevitable success, he added that he would "never fail to acknowledge the wise and liberal part acted on this occasion by the Representatives from Massachusetts."[30] The advice Everett had provided was summed up in his essay entitled "The Tariff Question," appearing in the North American Review a month after President Monroe signed the Tariff of 1824 into law.

There was no reason to accept the principle that the tariff would benefit American competition with Europe or stabilize America's economic decline, Everett argued. This view was based upon the myth which assumed that tariffs have a bearing on economic prosperity or decline.[31] The economic condition of Europe was most likely a reflection of numerous institutions, laws and national habits, Everett said. Being the case, Everett pointed to the bright economic future which awaited Americans due to their favored national institutions. "Political

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[29]Dangerfield, Awakening, pp. 204-207.

[30]Daniel Webster to Edward Everett, 13 February 1824, Robert W. Hayne to Everett, 13 April 1824, 29 April 1824, 5 May 1824, EEP.

[31]Edward Everett, "The Tariff Question," North American Review 19 (July, 1824): 231-232.

independence, as contrasted with colonial subjection, or great subserviency to a powerful neighbor; a limited government, and still more, a representative government; the trial by jury, the freedom of the press, the equality of laws, the security of property; these are the springs of national prosperity; these make a nation powerful, prosperous, rich,; (sic) increase its population, multiply its resources."[32]

At this stage in Everett's life, he had not yet come to feel the presence of the new manufacturing class. It was the men of commerce who primarily influenced his life.[33] Thus in 1824 Everett opposed the creation of an American manufacturing system. Drawing on his European experience, he warned that introduction of manufacturing into America would eventually convert the new world to the old.[34] To demonstrate this point Everett argued that manufacturing produced a class of men which was not conducive to the American character.

> By a flourishing manufacture, in any valuable sense of the term, we mean one that supports the working class in decent competence. In almost every branch of manufactures, in every country, the wages of labor, like the wages of sin, is death;....

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[32] Ibid., pp. 234.

[33] On May 8, 1822 Everett married Charlotte Gray Brooks, the daughter of the wealthy Boston merchant Peter Chardon Brooks.

[34] Ibid., pp. 248-249.

> The manufacturer here is surrounded by a different class of men, from those about him there, and he must live accordingly. He is not surrounded by an humbled tenantry, who if they possess not each an annual income of one hundred poin, cannot shoot a partridge even on a field they might own in fee simple; and who if they be not free holders have no votes in the election of those, who are to make the laws.

The image of the American character which Everett offered as an alternative, not only resembled the New England type but was almost a portrait of Everett's own life history. Our workers expect on Sunday to

> wear very nearly as good a coat and hat as his rich neighbor, and to see his wife and daughter in a cambric or a silk. If either of his boys is at all clever, he expects to send him to the grammar school in the town, or the next academy, to prepare for college and receive an education, that shall fit him for the highest places of professional respectability. The wages of the manufacturer must be calculated on this scale; they must support, not a degraded, brutified vassal, but a reflecting, aspiring man, a freeholder, a voter, a constituent of those, who make the laws and who govern the country.[35]

All of Everett's time was not taken by problems of nationalism. For the most part, his life centered around academic and literary affairs. Everett's image during these years is hardly elusive. Ralph Waldo Emerson, a young student at Harvard during Everett's tenure, portrayed the "genius of Everett" and his "influence on the young people" as "almost comparable to that of Pericles in Athens." "If any of my readers were at that period in Boston or Cambridge," Emerson

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[35] Ibid., pp. 246-249. Emphasis mine.

wrote in his Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England,

> they will easily remember his radiant beauty of person, of a classic style, his heavy large eyes, marble lids, which gave the impression of mass which the slightness of his form needed; sculptured lips; a voice of rich tones, such precise and perfect utterance, that, although slightly nasal, it was the most mellow and beautiful and correct of all the instruments of the time.[36]

But Emerson also noted a somewhat distant personality. Still referring to Everett's oratory figure he remarked, "It was so coldly and weightily communicated from so commanding a platform, as if in the consciousness and consideration of all history and all learning-...."[37]

History's judgment, it seems, has tended to this latter view. Everett's own record points to a young man overwhelmed by his remarkable achievements, who often allowed his self-confidence and success to degenerate into an aloofness, coldness, and conceit. His dealings with the Corporation Harvard during his study and travel in Europe had exhibited an inflated view of his worth. Even Harvard's magnanimous arrangements with the young professor in 1814 had only added to his self esteem. By 1816, dissatisfied with these arrangements, Everett

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[36]Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Historic Notes of the Life and Letters in New England," in The Portable Emerson, ed. Mark Van Doren (New York, 1946), pp. 517-518.

[37]Ibid.

had asked for an extension of two years.[38] Though the request be "bold," he told Alexander, he thought it would be granted. Nevertheless, "should they refuse me now, I will stay; for I have leave of absence up to the time proposed, and when it comes to the pinch, of ordering me home, after having tailed here three years, without having travelled any, I think they will relent."[39] Even without their assent Everett had been determined to stay, for money was no obstacle. Though they might be disgusted with him, he had conjectured, they would not turn him out. The test had never come. On October 25, 1816, President Kirkland, speaking for the Corporation, had authorized the stay of two additional years at Göttingen and a year of travel.[40]

While Everett's strong stance had proved successful in Europe, once home a similar assumption resulted only in embarrassment and hard feelings. On April 27, 1821,

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[38]President Kirkland, "Note," Corporation Papers (1814-1815); President Kirkland to Everett 12 November 1819, College Papers (1819-1821), vol. 9.

[39]Everett to Alexander Everett, 16 June 1816, EEP.

[40]President Kirkland to Everett 25 October 1816, College Papers (1815-1919), vol. 8. Perhaps Joseph Cogswell's letter to Stephen Higginson Jr. was helpful to Everett. He hoped that those at the college would reconcile themselves to Mr. Everett staying in Europe. "There are great benefits to be derived from his learning. While men's clubs and dinner parties might be disappointed," he wrote, "America needs scholars and scholars take time to be formed. All will benefit from these scholars upon their return. Cogswell to Stephen Higginson Jr. Esq., 13 July 1817, JCP. See also Orie Long, Literary Pioneers (Massachusetts, 1935), p. 70.

Everett presented his petition to the college asking it to waive the faculty residency requirement in his case. There were precedents for this action to be sure, Ticknor for example; but most were men of the stature of John Quincy Adams. In the exchange of letters, Everett's aloofness and vanity were clearly in evidence. He informed the President and Fellows that April that in no way would the functioning of the college be affected. Neither did he play a significant role in the affairs of the administration nor was he close to the students, he said. Besides, his friends and family were in Boston.[41] To his friend Joseph Story, a member of the Board of Overseers, he bemoaned his fate and the embarrassing position the whole affair had placed him in. "I really could not hold up my head, under the shame of having been formally denied an indulgence, which (to say the least) three others, principally in my situation enjoy."[42] Nevertheless, on May 7, 1822, the Board of Overseers officially rejected the petition noting such action would be detrimental to the interest of the college.[43]

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[41]Everett to The Reverend and Honorable President and the Fellows of Harvard College, 27 April 1821, College Papers (1819-1821), vol. 9.

[42]Everett to Joseph Story, 8 November 1821, Joseph Story Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as JSP); President Kirkland to Everett, 5 May 1821, College Papers, vol. 9.

[43]Board of Overseers to Everett, 7 May, 1822, Records of the Overseers, vol. 6.

Perhaps it was this affront to his ego that prompted Everett in 1824 to "participate" in the educational reform movement initiated the year before by Professors Ticknor, Ware and Norton. It was most likely the legality of the issue which enticed Everett to pick up the pen twice to defend the rights of resident faculty. For him the issue was not educational reform. To J. G. Carter, Everett referred to Ticknor's reforms as "exceedingly trifling and paltry" and even defended his actions of standing "aloof from all the details of the petty reforms which have been undertaken."[44]

If these college affairs alone do not provide a fair example of his personality, his dealings as editor of the North American Review offer additional insight. That his assumption of the editorship boosted the languishing journal to national popularity cannot be denied. During the three years under his control, the periodical, transformed into a quarterly, increased its subscription list from six hundred to sixteen hundred.[45]

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[44]Everett to J.G. Carter, 31 October 1825, EEP, vol. 57; Henry Ware, Levi Hedge, John S. Popkin, Asahel Stearns, Sidney Willard, John Farrar, Andrews Norton, Edward Everett, George Otis, James Hayward, Nathaniel Wood to the Reverend and Honorable The Corporation of Harvard University, March, 1824, Harvard University Archives.

[45]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 16, 20; Everett to Hon J. McLean, 7 October, 1828, EEP, vol. 63.

Soon after his arrival, however, certain difficulties arose which led Everett to believe he was the focus of personal injustice. By 1821, he was convinced that jealous members of the editorial board, especially Willard Phillips and John Mason, were hampering him and the growth of the journal. To John G. Palfrey, another member, Everett set forth his proposal to turn the complete editorial role over to himself. With the growth of the journal coincident with his arrival, he informed Palfrey, it seemed fitting he be rewarded with a greater share in the N.A.R., and in addition an "agent's percentage" to be paid his brother Oliver, now employed by the corporation.[46]

This issue of control continued into 1823 when tempers intensified.[47] By this time Everett demanded complete ownership of the journal. In a letter to Jared Sparks, he set forth his complaints. He argued that he had contributed almost all the work accounting for the

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[46]Everett to J.G. Palfrey, 1821 John G. Palfrey Papers, Houghton Library (hereafter cited as JPP).

[47]Edward Everett did not attend Palfrey's wedding in 1823, illness being the excuse. Letters to Palfrey of 1821-1822 were addressed "Dear Colleague," or "Dear Friend," changed in 1823 to the more formal "My Dear Sir," or simply "Dear Sir." Palfrey wrote to Jared Sparks in May, 1823 that Everett "has made me thoroughly sick of this business." Palfrey to Sparks, 24 May 1823, Jared Sparks Papers, Houghton Library (hereafter cited as JSP).

review's growth and had not been sufficiently rewarded. Of the seven volumes published, the proprietors had made few contributions, the bulk coming from his brother Alexander or himself. If his demands were not met, he warned Sparks, he would sell his shares and establish a parallel journal which he would call the New North American Review.[48]

Things never did reach the point where this alternative was really considered. Certain members of the board had written to Sparks asking if he would wish to assume control. It also appears that Sparks was able to pacify Everett by reminding him that he had gained much fame and influence during the years of his editorship and that the failure of others in the "club" to contribute was due to his own ability to write or collect sufficient articles for each edition. As for his attitude concerning his compensation or other members of the club, these were misinformed.[49] By July 1823, however, Everett agreeing to resign had re-evaluated his position to accept either Sparks or Palfrey as editor. He also wanted to be assured that his brother Oliver could remain

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[48]Everett to Sparks, 24 May 1823, JSP, vol. 132.3H.

[49]Copy of Sparks letter to Edward Everett quoted in letters to both Willard Phillips and J.G. Palfrey. Sparks to Palfrey, 29 May 1823, Sparks to Phillips, 29 May 1823, Palfrey to Sparks, 24 May 1823, Phillips to Sparks, 25 May 1823, JSP, vol. 132.3H.

with a compensation of five hundred dollars. "If you will agree with this," he wrote Sparks, "I'll agree not only to not publish a periodical work, but to help you with all the aid of an active contributor...."[50] Jared Sparks eventually accepted the offer, on September 13, 1823, Everett signed his shares over to the new editor. In return, he received four thousand dollars to be spread over the next four years.[51] Some years later, Everett remarked that his tenure as editor had led him to speculate upon the national character. His defense of the country against the attacks of foreign journalists were "relished by our countrymen," he wrote, and was greatly responsible for the journal's unparalleled growth.[52]

Jared Sparks was certainly correct about the public esteem Everett had gained during these years. While his personal relationships were often marred because of his inflated ego, his public image had been enhanced in the four years he had returned from Europe. His position within Boston society had been solidified,

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[50]Everett to Sparks, 12 July 1823, JSP, vol. 132. 3H; Everett to Palfrey, 16 July 1823, JPP.

[51]"Purhcase of the North American Review," 13 September 1823, JSP, vol. 132.3H. Everett's share was $4,000 which turned out to be the largest.

[52]Everett to Hon. J. McLean, 7 October 1828, EEP, vol. 63; See also Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 16-17, EEP.

basically as the results of his academic and scholarly achievements. In February 1820, Joseph Story, writing his wife from Washington, indicated how the young minister had already mesmerized the elite.

> The sermon was truly splendid, and was heard with breathless silence.... I saw Mr. King of New York and Mr. Otis of Massachusetts there; and Mr. Otis in particular wept bitterly.... Indeed, Mr. Everett was almost universally admired as the most eloquent of preachers. Mr. King said to me he had never heard a discourse so full of unction, eloquence, and good taste....[53]

Thus in the summer of 1824, in recognition of his achievements, Everett was invited to address the Society of Phi Beta Kappa. What made the event more significant than in other years was the presence in the audience of General La Fayette. La Fayette, the adopted son of the American Revolution, was paying his last visit to the country of his youthful romance. Since notice of the great man's presence arrived only a few days before the speech, Everett barely had time to reevaluate his scheduled oration, "The Circumstances Favorable to the Progress of Literature in America." "It was out of my power to do more than close my address with an allusion to the General and the excitement of my own feelings, heightened by the uncontrollable sympathy evinced by the audience, so deprived me of self-possession that I scarce knew what

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[53]Joseph Story to Mrs. Joseph Story, 14 February 1820, in The Life and Letters of Joseph Story, vol. 1, ed., W. W. Story (Boston, 1951), pp. 381-382.

I said," he recalled later.[54]

The significance of the event in Everett's life is heightened if we return to the period immediately preceding the oration. Circumstances were such that at this time Timothy Fuller, the representative to Congress from Middlesex County, had proposed to retire. On August 15, 1824 Daniel Webster wrote Everett to inform him of the vacancy. He noted that there was some talk of Everett entering into the congressional race.[55] This, however, is the first evidence available concerning the matter, though Everett was never really content at Harvard. Back in 1821 he had written to Joseph Story bemoaning his fate. The whole pursuit and duties of the position, he wrote, did not bring the deserved respectability, and led him into contact with some "little men and many little things." "In short I die daily of a cramped spirit...."

At the same time Everett informed Story that he lacked political ambition. "I regard the high office of our country as splendid burdens - hardly splendid -;" he wrote, "and I am desirous of embracing the Profession

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[54]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 29-30, EEP.

[55]Webster to Everett, 15 August 1824, Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 18, EEP.

of Law, with a view of supporting myself by the laborious practice of it."[56] Three years later, recounting the event to Judge J. McLean, Everett restated that "all this time however I was entirely aloof from politics; I had never in my life given a vote at a National or State election. I had no more idea of becoming a public man, then you have of becoming an academical one."[57]

This was most likely the case, for Everett's influence with what Webster termed the "politicians" was small. Webster had written that Everett would have no problem with the public but rather with these men.[58] As it turned out, Webster had understood the situation. In October the local political caucus met and of thirty votes cast for candidates to replace Fuller, Everett received only two. His supporters, perhaps inspired by the oration given that summer's day in 1824, when tears were brought to the eyes of those attending, called a convention of "young men" and by a large majority nominated their hero.[59] On the first Monday of November 1824, Everett was elected to the House of Representatives from Middlesex County, a member of the all-encompassing Republican party.

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[56]Everett to Story, 13 April, 1821, JSP.

[57]Everett to Hon J. McLean, 7 October, 1828, EEP, vol. 63.

[58]Webster to Everett, 15 August 1824, EEP.

[59]Everett to Hon J. McLean 7 October 1828, EEP, vol. 63.

This choice to leave Harvard, though he had tried to maintain his status as a faculty member, was most likely prompted by the streak of vanity demonstrated in his past.[60] He possibly felt that the recognition he had received was not in proportion to what he deserved, a feeling he had often expressed in the past as well. At the age of thirty-one, Everett had already achieved a position within the scholarly world normally the end-product of a lifetime's work. The position and status he sought during the early twenties had been dampened by the Corporation of Harvard and members of the editorial board of the North American Review. The drive for recognition and prestige, therefore, was attracted to those channels which suddenly opened in 1824. Ironically, this choice to leave the seclusion of Cambridge and enter the world of Washington would be more significant for Everett than he planned. The life of politics would prove a severe test.

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[60]Upon accepting the position in Washington Everett had requested that he could remain on at the college. The precedent had been set, for example, with Chief Justice Parker and Justice Story as well as J.Q. Adams. Though Everett thought he was in this company the feeling was not endorsed by the Corporation. Though this decision provided some initial hard feelings the wounds were soon healed as Everett was appointed to the Overseers of the college. Everett to President Kirkland, 14 March 1825, College Papers (1824-25), vol. 9; Everett to President Kirkland, 30 March, 1825, Corporation Records, vol. 6; Everett to Hon J. McLean, 10 March 1825, Everett to P.C. Brooks, 10 March, 1825, Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 18-19, EEP.

CHAPTER V

A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

The failure of the people to speak decisively in the presidential election of 1824 intensified the political mood. Even after Congress chose a president, the climate remained strained, as charges of a "Corrupt Bargain" appeared. The new President, John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts and his Secretary of State, Henry Clay of Kentucky, had reached an agreement. The latter, a candidate himself, finally gave his support to the eastern Republican. While the defeated Hero of New Orleans, Andrew Jackson, gathered his forces and pledged to do battle again in four years, few predicted the emergence of new national parties. Into this political climate entered the freshman Congressman from Middlesex County.

Edward Everett was a Republican. If there had been a possibility of his entering the Federalist party -- and there is no evidence to suggest this -- by 1824 a choice hardly existed. During his years at Harvard, Everett had established a considerable reputation and was welcomed among the established Brahmin families. His

marriage to Charlotte Gray Brooks on May 8, 1822, symbolized his complete identification with the Boston elite.[1] Everett's older brother Alexander, his good friend Daniel Webster, and his father-in-law, Peter Chardon Brooks, had followed the path of John Quincy Adams into the party of Jefferson and were Everett's enthusiastic supporters.

As Congressman, Everett was no longer strongly affiliated with the literary and scholarly institutions. Though his thoughts on national literature and the American character had led him to the political system, his new political career identified him with these institutions. During the past five years Everett had established the Union as the central national mystique but had nevertheless clung to his English heritage.

In an exchange of letters with the Kentucky nationalist, Henry Clay in 1826, both agreed that the nation was a distinct entity. Clay expressed the view that the union was that political entity whose relationships were defined in the Constitution. "If the union were dissolved, the Nation would continue undoubtedly to exist, but it would exist in the form of its unassociated elements...."[2] On the 4th of July,

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[1]P.C. Brooks to Everett, 9 May 1822, EEP. As a gift P.C. Brooks set aside $30,000. The interest was to be sent yearly to the Everett family and Edward could dispose of the capital if investment would yield a higher income. Frothingham records that the sum was $20,000 and does not mention the possibility of investment. Frothingham, Everett, p. 76.

[2]Henry Clay to Everett, 22 April 1824, 3 July 1824, EEP.

1826, before a crowd gathered in Cambridge, Edward Everett elaborated on this difference. In this oration entitled, "Principles of the American Constitution," a title which speaks for his life's reorientation, Everett defined the nation as a people drawn together into great assemblages by a "social principle."[3] A people, he said, was the "direct and necessary consequence and development of the social nature in which we are created. It begins in family, expands into race, and descends to remote ages, through a long line of kindred generations." The bonds which united a people were more than mere legal fiction.[4]

By 1825 the psychological insecurity which had led to Everett's identification with his English heritage had been diminished by his own personal success and the nation's growth. Thus, while admitting that a distinction existed between the nation and the union, Everett now argued for the primacy of the political system in shaping the national character.[5] The principle role of

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[3]Edward Everett, "The Principles of the American Constitution," 4 July 1826 Orations, 1:111.

[4]Ibid., p. 121. The remark "corporation" or "legal fiction," was Everett's reference to the Burkean notion of a people. See also an earlier oration, Everett, "The First Battles of the Revolutionary War," 19 April, 1825, Orations, 1:98-99; Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," pp. 37-38.

[5]The role of ancestry was not really denied but merely set aside at this moment. In later years the question of "race," as Everett called it, became a

ancestry, to inherit and transmit the nation's vitality and creativity, was assumed by the political collective. "The greatest engine of moral power known to human affairs," Everett said, "is an organized, prosperous state." "All that man, in his individual capacity, can do -- all that he can effect by his private fraternities, by his ingenious discoveries and wonders of art, or by his influence over others -- is as nothing compared with the collective, perpetuated influence on human affairs and human happiness, of a well-constituted, powerful commonwealth."[6]

Furthermore, the value of tradition was not lost, for Everett connected the political union to man's historic nature. Man entered into a political society not because a legal compact had been drawn, but due to the very nature of his being. He is "formed for it; every man is formed for it." As participation in the

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significant part of his thought. Furthermore, in an article written for the NAR in July, 1831, Everett said, "Rousseau maintained that the family was the only society directly constituted by nature. This is true only in a very limited sense. Looking to the whole nature of man, moral and intellectual, as well as physical, his social character, instead of being confined to the limits of the family, extends not merely to the community, of which he is a member, and to the general class of nations, to which community belongs, but to the past and future generations, whose public fortunes are connected with the present by the chain of cause and effect." Everett, "The Prospect of Reform in Europe," North American Review 33 (July, 1831): 154-155.

[6]Everett, "Constitution," Orations, 1:129.

political collective was every man's destiny, so "every man has an equal right to its privileges."[7] For the first time in history, Everett informed his listeners, a political system had been established reflecting the laws of nature. The principle of nature that"all men are born free and equal" was the very principle espoused by the authors of the Declaration of Independence and the foundation upon which the American system was built. "On this principle our constitutions rest; and no constitution can bind a people on any other principle."[8] America possessed a system which brought into action a "vast increase of physical, political, and moral energy."[9] The state, in Everett's thought, became the ultimate ingredient for the evolution of man.

This oration of July 4, 1826, suggesting a natural bond between man and a political commonwealth, was perhaps shaped by events which occurred four months previously. The issue before the House of Representatives during the month of February was the recent presidential election. The friends of Jackson called for changes in the electoral procedure as well as tenure for the President. Though Everett had been advised by some not to speak on this

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[7] Ibid., p. 122.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., p. 127.

issue, he felt the time had come to set forth on his career. There was no point delaying the inevitable, he wrote Alexander. "The uncertainty whether I could speak weighed on my spirits; till I found I had better try and fail than be haunted with the ghost of that uncertainty." On March 3, 1826, his "ears ringing and little specks of light dancing before.../his/ eyes" -- the results of two aggravating days of trying to get the floor and a night's loss of sleep -- Edward Everett plunged into national politics.[10]

In the House, men of the South, Congressmen Duffy of South Carolina, and Romulus Saunders of North Carolina, had challenged the objectivity, the inclination toward compromise, and the desire to preserve the Union, of northern representatives. If northern men at this stage would not compromise on the question of presidential elections, would any compromise, even the Missouri Compromise, be secure?[11] Rushing forward to claim for himself the title of defender of the Union, Everett set forth his thought on the institution of slavery, its relationship to the Union, and to each citizen. Once slavery had been accepted by the Constitution as a political element determining the "distribution of power amongst the states of the Union and an agreement had been

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[10]Everett to Alexander Everett 25 March 1826, EEP, vol. 57.

[11]Register of Debates, 19th Congress, 1st Session, Part I, 1825-26, p. 1579.

reached in the matter, he would adhere to it like a man."[12] But Everett was not content with this promise. Possibly absorbed by the excitement of the moment, Everett sought to demonstrate the intensity of his nationalism. He wished to disassociate himself, he said, from those "who would think it immoral and irreligious to aid in putting down a slave insurrection in the South." "I am no soldier sir:" he began,

> my habits and education are very unmilitary; but there is no cause in which I would sooner buckle a knapsack to my back, and put a musket on my shoulder, than that. I would cede the whole continent to anyone who would take it -- to England, to France, to Spain: I would see it sunk to the bottom of the Ocean, before I would see any part of this fair America converted into a continental Hayti, by that awful process of bloodshed and desolation, by which alone such a catastrophe could be brought on.

Then drawing upon his knowledge and reputation as a minister, adding to his already remarkable pledge, Everett continued:

> I cannot admit that Religion has but one voice to the slave, and that this voice is 'Rise against Your Master.' No, sir, the New Testament says, 'Slaves obey your Masters,' and though I know full well, that, in the benignant operation of Christianity, which gathered master and slave around the same communion table, this unfortunate institution disappeared in Europe, yet I cannot admit, that, while it subsists, and where it subsists, its duties are not pre-supposed and sanctioned by religion.[13]

Finally, appealing to his European experience, Everett provided an oratorical capstone.

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

> I know the conditions of the working class in other countries; I am intimately acquainted with it in some other countries, and I have no hesitation in saying, that I believe the slaves in the country are better clothed and fed, and less hardly worked, than the peasantry of some of the most prosperous states of the continent of Europe.[14]

Needless to say, these words produced a strong reaction. History has recorded the prophetic response of John Randolph who supposedly rose to his feet and, with finger extended, said, "He envied not the head or the heart of the Northern man who could utter such sentiments."[15] Though this event never occurred, for Randolph was not present in the House at this time, the fact that this historic untruth was widely believed suggests that most listeners agreed with its sentiment. Everett, however, received ample praise from such notables as Joseph Story, Henry Clay, Caleb Cushing, and even, according to Everett, the President.[16] By April however, it was clear that the hostile comments would dominate. To

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Frothingham, Everett, pp. 106-108.

[16] Story to Everett, 21 March 1826, Clay to Everett 9 March 1826, Caleb Cushing to Everett, 15 March 1826, Jefferson reserved approval, Jefferson to Everett 8 April 1826, EEP; In a letter to his brother Alexander, Everett wrote that the President remarked that "the doctrine on that subject was sound." Everett to Alexander Everett 25 March 1826, EEP, vol. 57. See also remarks of Congressman Hoffman of New York and Congressman C. C. Cambreleng of the same state for rebukes of Everett. Register of Debates, 19th Congress, 1st Session, Part II, 29 March 1826, 20 April 1826.

Thomas Jefferson he wrote, "my remarks in the speech have been exceedingly distasteful at home. Nearly all our parties have united to condemn me. Co-religionists, co-yankees and whatever other co-fraternity one can belong to. I must therefore infer, if I have not failed in doctrine I have in prudence...."[17]

How can these remarks be explained? Everett was no slave-holder, nor was he identified with those in the North who had economic interests in preserving the system. To Jefferson, he wrote, "On the subject of slavery I do not mean to maintain that in the abstract one man has a right 'to appropriate to himself the faculties of another without his consent.'"[18] In fact, back in 1820 when Everett assumed the editorship of the N.A.R., he was extremely critical of the recently passed Missouri Compromise. Up to the moment of passage, he had written, the condition of slavery in America was the responsibility of the English. Overlooking both the constitutional adjustment and the extension of slavery into the new southern states of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, Everett attributed its establishment and preservation to English laws and for the benefit of English traders.

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[17]Everett to Jefferson, 16 April 1826; See also, Everett to Messrs. Gales and Seaton, 5 August 1826, Everett to Alexander Everett, 23 April 1826, EEP, vol. 57.

[18]Everett to Jefferson, 16 April 1826, EEP, vol. 57.

When the American colonies tried to prohibit further introduction, British governors rejected this under orders from the English ministry. In other words, up to 1820, America's moral position was unquestioned.[19] To Harrison Gray Otis, Everett bemoaned the general apathy which permeated the country upon its adoption. With the conclusion of the Compromise, he wrote, the people "soon fell to sleep, and now slumber more soundly than ever, on all the great points, with regard to which this Missouri should have opened their eyes."[20]

What "great points" did Everett have in mind? Was it the image of the American character which the Missouri debate presented? Was it a premonition of future conflict, or a sense of humanity awakened by the great moral question? If any of these factors explained his attitude of 1820, by 1826 he too had fallen under the power of sleep. For some reason, beyond definitive explanation, Everett had lost his sense of humanity with respect to the blacks. Perhaps his education within the framework of a rational unemotional, and orderly world

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[19]Edward Everett, "Mr. Walsh's Appeal, "North American Review 10 (April, 1820): 370-371.

[20]Everett to Harrison Gray Otis, 18 April 1820, Harrison Gray Otis Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as HOP).

had left him devoid of that quality necessary to excite him to a moral stance. But there were so many exceptions to this rule that other factors must be considered.

Everett's congressional speech of 1826 gives us an important clue. Placed within the framework of his nationalism, his uncalled for pledge of physical support to suppress a slave insurrection presages the pattern of his political life. As he saw it, he had not defended slavery, but the Union. For Everett the events in Haiti had clearly demonstrated a potential threat to the United States. In November 1814 Everett had already shown signs of this fear. Should the slaves ever rise, one of two things would be the event, he wrote in his journal during his visit to Virginia: after cruel massacres and slaughter of women and children the "blacks" would be exterminated or resubjugated, or they would be successful for the moment. The "blacks" would probably soon be invaded from the middle and eastern states, "hemmed in and cut up -- and a remnant driven to the ridge to harass the country, for a few generations, till they gradually disappear like the Indian tribes." The soil would be restored to the whites and slavery would cover the land within ten years.[21] To Jefferson twelve years later, Everett continued to raise the spectre

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[21]"Visit to Washington," 19 November 1814, EEP, vol. 123.

of Haiti in justification of his own words of March, 1826. "May I venture to ask whether such strong expression as you use in your Notes on Virginia were not offensive to the citizens of the slave-holding states," he reflected.

> I think if any eminent Southern politician were now to use such language, he would be all but proscribed. It is true the revolt of San Domingo had not then taken place. May I add, that had it then taken place, I think you might not have expressed yourself as you did.[22]

The state had not only achieved the central position in Everett's ideology but its sanctity and security became his foremost concern. Dismissing moral and humanitarian questions, Everett demonstrated the characteristics of the "cold" man attributed to him in the past. As he deemed Ticknor's educational reforms abstract and insignificant, so he overlooked the moral question of slavery while he glorified the legal political manifestation, the Union.[23]

Reading his journal of 1814, one is struck by the almost total lack of attention directed toward the condition of the slaves. Discussing their position within southern society, he showed few signs of shock or despair. Though his observations were clear and at times remarkably perceptive, they were noticeably devoid of any emotion. Hiring a rowboat to cross the Potomac,

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[22]Everett to Jefferson 14 April 1826, EEP, vol. 57.

[23]See Chapter IV, p. 94.

his encounter with the "peculiar institution" brought forth the description of "six stout hearty slaves, comfortably clad, and apparently healthy and strong." And upon arriving at the plantation of Mr. and Mrs. Catlet of Virginia, confronting for the first time the domestic aspects of slavery, Everett's sympathy for three generations of slaves was almost negligible. "From what I could observe, on various occasions," he recorded, "these poor wretches do not feel the debasement of their condition, and are as much resigned to their slavery, as servants here to their servitude. It is true I had no opportunity to see any but the house slaves, whose condition and treatment are said to be far more comfortable than those of the field negroes."[24]

While Everett might have had additional contacts with plantation life after his return from Europe, none are specifically recorded, and therefore could not have been extensive. Yet despite this important fact, Everett in March, 1826, without any sign of trepidation, favorably compared the bondage of the black man to that of the European peasant. And at another moment, in his speech he suggested that equality of conditions even existed at home. If populations were checked by poverty, want, starvation, disease, and all the ills of life,

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[24]"Y" to W," 19 November 1814, EEP, vol. 57.

then what inference might be drawn from the fact that the black slave population in the United States was increasing faster than white?[25]

Yet as we noted earlier, Everett was certainly aware of the blacks' presence. While he feared this indigenous population, his mind had also grasped the impact which the system was having upon the South and the perilous days which lay ahead for the Union. "The moral influence of slavery upon the virtue of their masters is deplorable," he thought that day in 1814. "The children of the family have each a little slave, just old enough to lead them about, set over them, and thus they grow up together." On the basis of these limited observations, Everett concluded that the situation in the slave-holding states was the "greatest political problem" he had met -- and one "which I fear will never be solved till it is done a future day, in terrible convulsions; and the subversion of the countries where this deplorable system prevails."[26]

By 1826, however, the issue of slavery only tended to confuse and aggravate the serious divisions manifested by the growth and transformation of the national economy. The War of 1812 had forced the young nation to draw upon

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[25] Register of Debates, pp. 1579-1580.

[26] "V to W," 19 November 1814, EEP, vol. 57.

its own wealth and resources once the British treasure chest of manufactured goods had been denied. Though in 1827 the new manufacturing class was amorphous, Daniel Webster's conversion to protection that year foretold of the coming new age.[27]

As mentioned, in 1824 Everett argued that manufacturing should not have an important role in the national economy. While not actually involved in the debates, he had put forth his reservations concerning the adoption of such a system in America, especially in light of how it had transformed English society. Two things were significantly different in 1828: manufacturing was already an established fact and recognizable as a dynamic element in the New England economy, and, secondly, the pattern of this development was clearly sectional in character. While during the controversy of 1824, the sectional positions were all but clear and thus southerner and northerner could rally around the free-trade principle, despite the obvious sectional interests of nascent manufacturing; by 1828, the polarization was obvious to all.[28]

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[27]Marx, Machine in the Garden; Richard Current, Daniel Webster (Boston, 1955), p. 51.

[28]Dangerfield, Era of Good Feeling; Dangerfield, American Nationalism; Arthur Schlesinger Jr. The Age of Jackson (Boston, 1945), p. 34; Edward Pessen, Jacksonian America (Albany, 1967), pp. 173, 175, 201.

Everett's role in the 1828 tariff controversy certainly was not typical of a Massachusetts congressman. Throughout the struggle over passage, he did not take the floor. Though he eventually endorsed the protectionist position and in May, 1828, voted for the Senate's amended version of the tariff, his silent role during the winter of 1826-1827 was perhaps indicative of both his uncertainty surrounding the transition and prudent nature. On the other hand, Everett's activity during the period of 1825 through the early months of 1827 were consumed for the most part in other affairs. Having been appointed to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, his interest naturally focused on diplomacy.

By 1825, however, signs of his rethinking were apparent. In a letter to J.C. Warren, Everett endorsed the position that woolen manufactures required some protection against foreign competition. But Everett did not raise this need to the position of a national economic imperative. His endorsement was precipitated by a desire, he said, to prevent the destruction of capital invested, "and the anihilation of a valuable branch of industry." This protection, he warned, must be "moderate and honestly adopted to the end, -- and not calculated to create a monopoly." Likewise, his pessimistic conjecture that such a measure would be voted down by a coalition of northerners and southerners,

might also have determined his passive role.[29]

Everett surely recognized the significant growth that had occurred. In October, 1825, he visited the woolen factory at Waltham, Massachusetts. "Three years ago there were but a handful of inhabitants where there are now 2,000," he recorded in his diary, "a very slightly episcopal church has been built. They give the minister $88 and a house. All persons employed pay $1.50 per an/num/ for a seat in the church: they pay it whether they go or not."[30]

Full conversion to the cause of protection, however, was not evident until early 1827. Following the first house vote on the Woolens Bill in February, Everett referred to himself as a "representative of a Manufacturing district."[31] By the summer, he threw his weight behind the woolen manufacturers meeting at Harrisburg. To Lewis Tappan, he not only indicated his endorsement, but promised next winter to "make as great an effort as I can on the woolen business, and I am desirous to possess myself as fully as possible of the subject." Further to prove his faith he offered to be included among those who were scheduled to speak before the

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[29]Everett to J.C. Warren, 13 March 1825, Warren Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as JWP).

[30]"Diary," 25 October 1825, EEP, vol. 139.

[31]Everett to Alexander Everett, 11 February 1827, EEP, vol. 60.

meeting of wool-growers, wool-manufacturers, and their friends to be held at the State House on June 5, 1827.[32] His speech proved so favorable that he was appointed as one of the six delegates to attend the national convention in Harrisburg on July 29, 1827.[33]

In part, Everett's actions were prompted by the criticism he received for his earlier silent position. "Having been a good deal censured for the vote I gave in favor of the woolens' bill last winter," he wrote Alexander after his state house speech, "which was a silent vote, I went to the meeting and made a speech on the subject...."[34] Thus Everett's transformation to a protection advocate most likely reflected the change in the economic and political picture of Massachusetts. We can dismiss the motive of economic gain ascribed at times to Webster, a view which Everett rejected as pure

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[32]Everett to Lewis Tappen Esq., 3 June 1827, EEP, vol. 60.

[33]Ibid. See also "Diary," 5 June 1827, EEP vol. 139. The speech made at the convention appeared in the National Intelligencier on June 18, 1827. A fuller explication of his ideas are found, however, in his Congressional speech three years later.

[34]Everett to Alexander Everett, 26 June 1827, EEP vol. 61; See also Everett to Hon. Joseph Lawrence 7 June 1827, EEP, vol. 60, Everett to Nathan H. Carter, Senior Editor of the New York Statesmen, 22 June 1827, EEP, vol. 61.

fabrication.[35] Though his father-in-law, P.C. Brooks, was a wealthy Boston merchant, by 1828 the family fortune was secure and no sign of family pressure can be found. The affinity, therefore, between Everett and the manufacturing class, was due to its growing influence within Massachusetts society and the national economy.

Everett, however, was faced with his earlier endorsement of protection and his critical comments concerning its effects upon social life as evidenced in Europe. In an article written two years after the passage of the tariff of 1828, Everett explained his reversal on the basis of the principle of change. "A man who boasts that he never changed an opinion," he wrote, "boasts only that he has never acknowledged nor corrected an error."[36] But Everett continually turned to the fact that his constituency had changed and therefore his responsibility was to represent these changing interests. "I have the honor" he said before the members of Congress in May 1830, "to represent

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[35]In a letter to Col. B.F. Hunt, Everett wrote, "I never heard that Mr. Webster had invested property in Manufactures, & I do not believe it. He had some time ago shares in a Cotton factory, which was in a course of erection, but which has not (I understand) as yet proved a very good property & I doubt if he now owns any manufacturing stock whatsoever." Everett to Col. B.F. Hunt, 12 September 1827, EEP, vol. 61.

[36]Edward Everett, "Speeches made in the Senate of the United States, on occasion of the Resolution offered by Mr. Foote, on the subject of the Public Lands, during the First Session of the Twenty-first Congress," North American Review 31 (October, 1830): 528-529.

the district containing very large manufacturing places, Waltham and Lowell, where more property is probably invested in manufactures than at any other place in the Union. The town of Lowell, especially...has grown up exclusively under the manufacturing influence."[37]

The point is that Everett's perceptive and penetrating insight into the effects of manufacturing had lost its appeal once manufacturing became an established fact. Other men like Hawthorne, Melville, Thoreau, and Emerson would continue to cry out against the tragic turn of events; but Everett succumbed to the reality and accepted it as symbol of progress.[38] By October 1831, Everett had totally adopted the manufacturers' image of progress. One by one, he rejected his earlier fears of 1824. Higher prices had not occurred, revenue had sustained itself, and the national treasury was overflowing. Finally, instead of the manufacturing establishments proving to be seminaries of vice, as was apprehended, Everett noted that they were "distinguished for order and morality."[39]

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[37] Register of Debates, 21st Congress, 1st Session, 8 May 1830, p. 911, See also, p. 903.

[38] The work of Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden, is the most significant work in pointing to the fears expressed by these men.

[39] Edward Everett, "American Manufacturing," 14 October 1831, Orations, 2:95-96.

When Everett finally addressed the House in 1830, the role of manufacturing in the nation was no longer ambivalent. Sectional interests were clear. Objections by northern commercial shipping interests had been overcome. Thus a twofold problem existed for Everett. First, he had to explain his sudden reversal on free trade. Secondly, he had to resolve this apparent sectional interest within the context of his nationalism.

Everett did not deny his previous opposition to high tariff, but historical forces, such as the war of 1812 and the action taken by Congress in 1828, which he did not strongly support, had brought about a radical change in the economy. These historic events, not the New England majority, were responsible for the growth of manufacturing. The roots were not northern, he insisted. Southerners like Jefferson had "called this manufacturing system into existence." Producing a letter of President Jefferson, dated January 21, 1809, Everett read, "The good sense of our country will see that its greatest prosperty depends on a due balance between agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and not in this protuberant navigation, which has kept us in hot water from the commencement of our Government, and is now engaging us in war!"[40]

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[40] Register of Debates, 21st Congress, p. 911.

Everett described the destiny of the New England manufacturer as it was directed by the national will. Though these men had remonstrated and protested against this action, "while writhing under burdens almost too grievous to be borne, she did utter her complaints, in a tone, patriotic as now echoed by the South, but treasonable in her; and which has given her brethren a pretext to set their foot upon her neck, and press her beaming forehead to the dust." And now, said Everett, after having her capital driven into manufacturing establishments, "because she is not willing that the laws passed against her will, beneath which her manufactures have grown up, would be swept abruptly away, she is avaricious, inconsistent, a hungry monopolist, and the vocabulary of the language is tasked for terms of opprobrium to heap on her." Not by her own making, did New England find herself the center of a growing manufacturing interest. Now, concluded Everett, this interest had grown to the point where the health of the national economy depended upon its preservation.[41]

By transforming manufacturing into a product of the national will, Everett sought to acquit New England of any responsibility for the present and future position of manufacturing. And as proof of his nationalism, his change, he said, reflected this national economic

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[41] Ibid., pp. 911-912.

metamorphosis rather than sectional interest. His nationalist credentials had not only been preserved but enhanced by his admitted change, he believed.

On October 14, 1831, before the fourth annual fair of the American Institute of the City of New York, Everett presented his concept of this new national economy. The three great branches of the economy now included commerce, agriculture and manufactures. And "all flourish together and neither languishes that the rest may thrive."[42] Manufacturing now raised to a national imperative must be preserved to preserve the national economy, he said. For an example, Everett argued that we must defend our young manufactures against foreign competition so that our agricultural producers will not be at the mercy of a foreign market which might at any time refuse to be "fed by the agricultural produce of the customer who consumes his fabric." This was a real possibility and it was absolutely necessary to the well-being of the nation, "by a judicious legislation, to rear up a class of domestic manufacturers who will make the exchange."[43]

Thus, by intellectual juggling, a talent Everett had certainly mastered, his commitment to both nation

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[42]Everett, "Manufacturing," Orations, 2:72.

[43]Ibid., pp. 75-78.

and section were no longer posed as antagonists. This interpretation also indicated that the sectional commitment was greater for Everett. The concept of the national economy clearly mirrored New England's economic condition. She alone possessed Everett's three economic branches: commerce, agriculture and manufacturing.

But by 1830 the actions and philosophy of certain southerners, especially those of South Carolina and its spokesman John C. Calhoun, provided Everett further relief from this dilemma. Nullification was the issue and Everett, freed from the stigma of sectional interest, supported by the unified population of Massachusetts, rose to his nation's defense.[44] In 1830, writing for the N.A.R., Everett presented his view on the most complicated question of political sovereignty. The essay did not, however, produce new ideas as much as a restatement of the nationalist interpretation of the union. In 1820 Everett had demonstrated his acceptance of the historic Federalist position on the relationship of power and the nature of the Union. "The States," he wrote in the N.A.R., "are sovereign and independent communities,

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[44] Arthur B. Darling, Political Changes in Massachusetts, 1824-1848 (New Haven, 1925) pp. 147-148 (hereafter cited as Darling, Massachusetts). Darling writes, "For most New Englanders, however, nullification practically obliterated the question of tariffs. Liberals and conservatives, no matter what their convictions on the relative merits of free trade and protection, or states rights and centralized authority, could not oppose each other publicly, Jacksonians and aristocrats for once were of the same opinion."

within certain limits, and for certain purposes" and within these limits their jurisdiction is "ultimate." "The same American people which constituted the state sovereignties, constituted the national sovereignty to effect objects, which they did not choose to confide to the states, in any form, or under any qualification. This is the theory of our national and state governments."[45]

But in 1820, challenges to the system's viability came from abroad and it was to that challenge that Everett addressed his remarks. Those who believed the national government to be a "confederacy of several states" were misinformed. "Such it is not and was not meant to be, and the constitution opens with a formal refutation of this error." The phrase "we the people," pointed to the essence of its power.[46] By 1830, however, attacks on the system were centered not outside the continent but within the body politic. The tariff, for men of the South Carolina school, went beyond the question of trade. This economic issue, the stance of northern representatives, tended to intensify the fears already held concerning the viability of their peculiar sectional institution and local life-style.[47]

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[45]Everett, "Walsh' Appeal," NAR (April, 1820):347-348.

[46]Ibid., p. 346.

[47]William Freehling, Prelude to Civil War (New York, 1965); William Taylor, Cavalier and Yankee (New York, 1957).

Everett sometimes sensed this connection, but for the most part refused to admit its applicability. Though he admitted that the central question was the right of revolution and natural rights, he denied the relevance of these points to the national debate and directed himself to the legal and constitutional aspects. None, he suggested, could take as serious the constitutional question of the right of secession.[48] Nullification was based on the absurd state's rights approach to sovereignty which few admitted as valid.

> If it be finally meant, by a reserved right that it is a constitutional right of <u>every</u> sovereign State... that enters into a constitutional compact, to judge when the acts are against its provisions, the unsoundness of the proposition is too evident to be argued. Every constitutional compact of Government made by reasonable men, should provide for a tribunal to settle controversies. If this be omitted,...then, we admit, the parties reserve to themselves the right, severally, of quitting the confederacy in case of disagreement; but this is not a constitutional right; it is a natural right. This is the commonlaw of partnerships. Putting the Union, if you please, merely on the loose footing of a partnership; supposing it to be the slightest connection in which bodies of men could live or act together; no one ever heard that any single partner could suspend the action of all the rest, till two thirds had consented to a modification or explanation of the articles. The utmost he can claim, is a right to quit the firm. The utmost that South Carolina can claim, is a right to quit the Union.[49]

Everett then immersed himself in the issue of whether the Supreme Court was an objective arbiter. The "General

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[48]Edward Everett, "Foot's Resolution," <u>NAR</u> (October, 1830): 489-490.

[49]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 515.

Government," he began, was the creation of the people rather than the States, but even this question was not really a factor. It mattered not, he wrote, if one considered the "General Government: the creation of the people or the States." The point was, the Supreme Court "is not a tribunal created by the General Government; but with the branches of the General Government, it is itself the creature (as we say) of the people, or (as South Carolina says) of the States."[50]

But what, in fact, had Everett's argument resolved? If he was suggesting that the House of Representatives spoke for the people in its collective form and the collective representatives had created a court in the name of the people, we merely return to the question of who created the House of Representatives, or, for that matter, the general government, for this would determine ultimate authority. Everett denied that this question was debatable or, in fact, significant. Even when the complex question of change was recognized, he buried it beneath the legal and functional operations of majorities and minorities. Of all the theories of government offered which would enable the people to determine and act in concert with the "will of the people," and at the same time preserve the integrity of the individual,

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[50] Ibid., p. 512.

it was government of the majority, he said. The individual "can never then be injured or successfully opposed by less than one half; but give to any less number than a majority the right to decide questions, and each individual is liable to be successfully opposed; by a third, a quarter, or a single individual, as the case may be."[51]

But even this question, as Everett posed it, overlooked the salient point. It was not a challenge to the principle of majority rule which Calhoun proposed. The southern school, nurtured in the ideology of John Taylor, argued for another way, rather than numerical quantity, to perceive majorities. The national government, reflecting this ficticious numerical majority, no longer could be trusted. But in the place of understanding Everett offered his own irrelevant criticism on those aspects of the constitution which required a number greater than a majority.[52] Once more sectional pull proved stronger than his nationalism. Everett, content with the successful transformation and the new definition of the national economy, was not prepared to make new adjustments to meet southern alternatives for organizing the union.

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[51] Ibid., p. 517.

[52] Ibid., p. 518.

This would have required a reevaluation of his nationalist conceptions. Having resolved the crisis of his own sectional and national identity Everett did not meet this challenge. In March 1826, he clearly stated his views on change; "it is better, far better, to bear with almost any political evil, than to fly to the Constitution with amendments."[53]

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[53] Register of Debates, 19th Congress, 1st Session, 1825-1826, 9 March 1826, p. 1572.

CHAPTER VI

THE POLITICS OF PRESERVATION

For Edward Everett, conflict was anathema. His talents and temper were most conducive to the harmonious condition of the intellect. "Should the time ever come when party shall cease," he wrote to Justice McLean,

> when all men shall be just to all men, when the only question asked of Candidates will be, 'are they honest, are they capable, are they faithful to the constitution,' no one would rejoice more than I. This, or the nearest practicable approach to it, is the only state of things in which I can prosper politically, having neither taste nor talent for the duties of a partizan.[1]

But the politics of the "common man" was different. The atmosphere which Everett desired was not conducive to its style. "The minds of men have been more opened here of late, to the importance of the election, (I mean the minds of a class of men, who take little interest in politics,) and corresponding exertions have been made, of which I presume you have been duly apprized, from

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[1]Everett to Hon J. McLean, 18 August 1828, EEP vol. 63; See also, Everett to Hon. J. McLean 7 October 1828, EEP, vol. 63.

other sources," he wrote a month before the election.[2] Everett noted this new political mood in 1827, and suggested that it accounted for the movement of federalists toward the administration. They, like himself, were "friends of moderate counsels" and "no violent partizan." To them, the contest had come to mean whether America was to have "peace, order and stable institutions, or a military gov/ernmen/'t of force and passion...."[3] Jackson represented a danger to "our best institutions."[4]

Even before the November returns from the key state of New York could be counted he conceded the election. The October results from Pennsylvania had proven disastrous for the administration. In fact, Everett thought that the great majority given to Jackson, when compared to the calculations of some administration supporters, proved that there must have been much "unfair play."[5]

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[2]Everett to J. T. Johnston, 8 October 1828, EEP, vol.64.

[3]Everett to Hon. Jonathan Roberts, 28 September 1827, EEP, vol. 61, Everett to General H.S. Dearborn, 23 April 1827, EEP, vol. 60, Everett to Hon. E. Whittlesey, 7 August 1827, EEP, vol. 61.

[4]Everett to Col. Perkins Esq., 26 September 1827, EEP, vol. 61.

[5]Everett to Alexander Everett, 1 August 1828, EEP, vol. 62, Everett to Alexander Everett, 1 August 1828, 15 September, 1828, 1 October 1828, EEP, vols. 62, 63. Everett to P.P.F Degrand Esq, 20 October 1828, Everett to Edward Garnage Esq., 22 October 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

On October 30, Everett wrote his condolences to the President of the United States.[6]

Five months later, Everett wrote his brother, Alexander, expressing the meaning of Jackson's victory. "The triumph of Jacksonism has undone the work of ten or twelve years, and brought up the most miserable faction from the dregs of the community, to receive all the support of an overwhelming majority in the rest of the Union, and these to trample what is decent among us into the dust."[7] Soon after the election, Everett called to task every New Englander and Adams supporter to prevent the party from falling into the hands of these men.[8] Beyond this, New England men had to close ranks and pursue a course of prudent watch.[9]

Everett's advice at this time belie his strong sectional attachment. Although he recognized the apparent class overtones of the new political mood he defined the

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[6]Everett to the President of the United States (Private), 30 October 1828, Everett to Henry Clay, 1 November 1828, EEP, vol. 64, "Diary," 6 November 1828, EEP, vol. 141.

[7]Everett to Alexander Everett, 4 March 1830, EEP.

[8]Everett to Joseph E. Sprague (Private), 18 November 1828, Everett to Alexander Hill Everett, 2 December 1828, 15 November 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

[9]Everett to General Dearborn, 3 December 1828, Everett to Joseph Sprague, 8 November 1828, 20 December 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

conflict in terms of section rather than classes. The outcome of the election would determine which section would gain hold of the national government. The split emerging between Van Buren and Calhoun, the prospect of the PostMaster General and possibly Henry Clay entering the contest would create a state of things in which New England can only benefit he wrote in December, 1828.[10] "In this state of things" he told Bancroft, "if New England will remain united, she will hold the balance, and really possess more influence than at any time during the late Canvass."[11] And to Joseph Sprague he wrote of the confused political state the new administration would soon encounter as internal factions emerged. But, he added, this would only aid the "friends of Mr. Adams in New England," if they held together.[12]

The defeat of John Quincy Adams by Andrew Jackson Everett interpreted as a reordering of sectional power with a shift to the West. The reality of Western growth was perhaps clearer to Everett than to others. From

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[10]Everett to W. P. Farrand Esq, 28 December 1828, See also, Everett to Sam Whitcomb Jr., 1 December 1828, Everett to George Bancroft, 29 November 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

[11]Everett to George Bancroft, 29 November 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

[12]Everett to Joseph E. Sprague Es., 16 December 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

April 10 to July 10, 1829, Everett journeyed through the West from Ohio through the Mississippi Valley to New Orleans. The impact of this tour was quite significant as Everett himself recorded in his own autobiography; "...The opportunity I had enjoyed of seeing with my own eyes the astonishing spectacle of the growth of the Country, -- a spectacle which must be seen to be comprehended -- was a source of higher and more permanent gratification!"[13] He soon believed that he had even underestimated the growth of that section. The election of Jackson and the new emerging states in the west, Everett thought, challenged the position and influence of New England. The mere growth of population pointed to a redistribution of congressional power from the northeast to the west.[14]

But before Everett could completely establish a policy in response to the western threat the political scene was disrupted. In 1826 a New York bricklayer named Morgan, who had devulged the secrets of the Masonic lodge to which he belonged, vanished after his release from jail. The event revived the American prejudice against secret societies. Though Everett was not overly impressed

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[13]Everett, "Autobiographical Sketch," p. 48.

[14]Everett, "Lexington," Orations, 1:198-202.

by the strength of the new anti-Masonic movement at first, it was clear that he objected to the inclusion of any third party or new faction within the present party order. In 1828 he had condemned all talk of reorganization. "I have no doubt the views of many, who propose it were sound and good," he wrote Sprague. "But its only practical effect would have been to dissolve the administration party; while the Jackson party would have been left in full force, and would consequently have picked up the broken fragments of the administration party, and swelled to a majority."[15] And in 1829 in response to the anti-Mason threat, he wrote his brother Alexander,

> The real interests of New England require that the South not be permitted (as she has done systematically since 1801) to play off our factions against each other. The gross errors of the federal party enabled them to do this, to the utter prostration of the political strength of New England. Affairs had become in a good degree retrieved; and there was a fair chance, that the character and talent of our part of the country would begin to participate in the government.[16]

To Everett's chagrin anti-Masonry would not disappear, thus complicating his political approach. Everett had focused all his attention on the political fate of the Kentuckian, Henry Clay. Clay, Everett believed, was not

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[15]Everett to George Bancroft, 29 November 1828, Everett to Joseph E. Sprague, 16 December 1828, EEP, vol. 64.

[16]Everett to Alexander Everett, 4 March 1830, EEP.

only a man who had influence in the west but had demonstrated his allegiance to the friends of Adams. In May, 1830, Everett wrote that Clay's nomination had been universally accepted by "our friends."[17] This approach and Everett's optimistic mood continued into 1831. But by May, the anti-Masonic movement seriously complicated political alignments in the nation. Back in November, Everett had been disturbed about news that Clay men had voted for Jacksonians rather than support Anti-Masonic candidates. It was this kind of ideological fanaticism, he thought, which would make political unity impossible, especially in New England where Anti-Masonry was spreading.[18] This divisiveness only aggravated Clay's chances in Massachusetts, where certain friends of Daniel Webster were beginning to generate a Webster movement. Though Everett maintained his firm commitment to Clay, by the middle of 1831 he naively believed that Clay's Masonic affiliation was the cause of his problems.[19]

Everett's assessment of Anti-Masonry underestimated its political and emotional significance. He thought

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[17]Everett to Alexander Everett, 28 May 1830, Everett to Joseph Blunt Esq., 5 December 1830, EEP, vol. 65.

[18]Everett to ?, 5 February 1830, EEP.

[19]Everett to Charlotte Everett, 24 March 1831, EEP. Everett was concerned whether Clay could expect the support from any anti-Masons in Ohio and New York. Once again, however, he indicated his support "at all hazard & under all contingencies," for Henry Clay. Everett to Hon John Sargent, 21 May, 1831, EEP, vol. 66.

that Anti-Masons could be soothed if the Masonic lodges were dissolved. This tactic, he informed Clay, would free Anti-Masons to vote for those who had previously been members.[20] Clay, however, remained optimistic and rejected Everett's analysis that dissolution would resolve the issue. "They go for power," he answered, "and their object is to monopolize it, or rather to limit the sphere of selection, by excluding all Masons. If you were to dissolve, they would claim that as evidence of the criminality of Masonry, and continue their proscriptions of all Masons." Clay hoped, however, that "rational Antimasons" might be convinced that the issue had little to do with national politics, since it was the function of the state rather than the federal government to prohibit lodges and abolish oaths.[21]

Clay's opinion caused Everett to reevaluate his position. If the new phenomenon was not transitory; if, as Clay believed, it could not be tempered by simple dissolution; and if it was more than a momentary emotional attitude, then a more serious estimate of its strength was necessary. By September 1831 Everett had concluded that Clay could not win. Earlier he received news from Ohio that the state would go to Judge McLean, who he

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[20]Everett to Clay, 5 August 1831, EEP, vol. 66.

[21]Clay to Everett, 20 August 1831, EEP.

believed would get the Anti-Mason nomination at Baltimore. Everett thought that, with this nomination, Clay's chances of winning a popular majority no longer existed. This opinion, he informed J. S. Johnston, was shared by J. E. Sprague and other friends of Clay in Massachusetts. Furthermore, the states of Pennsylvania and New York would go for the Anti-Masons, thus enabling them during the next years to gain strength which would eliminate Clay for 1837. In all probability, with Clay, McLean, and Jackson in the race, Jackson would have four more years in which to destroy the bank, endanger the court, "and do what ever mischief he can do."[22]

The impending doom of Clay, Everett believed, spelled political isolation for New England. In a letter to his brother Alexander of December 10, 1831, Everett set forth opposition for continuing the contest. "I think I see in Perseverance, the doom of our Party sealed. We shall dwindle down into the mere rump of a faction, as the Federal party did; confined to New England, and particularly to Massachusetts. The Middle and Western States, now with us, will drop off, and leave us solitary, weak, and consequently contemptible."[23] As he saw it, there was one way to prevent this disastrous outcome and save a seed for future development. If Clay could be

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[22]Everett to Hon. J. S. Johnston, 7 September 1831, EEP.

[23]Everett to Alexander Everett, 10 December 1831, EEP.

made to withdraw, to cease his opposition at this point, the "principles" of several states which supported Clay would form the basis of a "large and ascendant National party." In other words, a return to the Republican party of James Monroe. Give Jackson his day, end the creation of an opposition party, stay within the present party accepting at this time Jackson as the head, work from within, and hope to reconstruct the National party along the lines acceptable to New England. Unless "some such dissolution and reconstruction take place," he warned, "New England is doomed to the same position, which she occupied from 1801 to 1825."[24] Furthermore, any attempt to create a new party out of National Republicans and Anti-Masons was impossible. The general fanaticism of the Anti-Masons and the rejection of any rapprochement with the Anti-Masonic candidate, William Wirt, by those he spoke to , made this impossible.[25]

In Washington, on December 6th, Everett met with Clay and his advisors and suggested that Clay withdraw. Yet, even at this moment, Everett had some second thoughts as he confided to his brother that he was "somewhat mistrustful of the soundness of.../his/ judgment, in

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Everett to Alexander Everett, 8 December 1831, EEP.

favor of withdrawing."[26] Clay was, nevertheless, swayed by others like General Dearborn, who saw in the idea of withdrawal a blow against state candidates and the destruction of the party. Henry Clay would continue the contest. For Everett, therefore, the threat to New England's influence in the nation became ever more pressing.

Clay's decision made it certain that New England would emerge from the 1832 election in a minority, Everett believed. Thus, for him the question became how to turn this faction into a national force. Although in March, 1832, he still had reservations about creating a new party, it was clear that the Anti-Mason party was a political force which had to be harnessed for New England's security.[27] The choice of electors could be used to win over Anti-Masons, he wrote Joseph McIlwaine in May. With a large majority in Massachusetts, neither of Masonic or Anti-Masonic persuasion, it would serve the party well to select electors from this neutral class. This tactic, he believed, would disarm the Anti-Masons. What's really important under any circumstances, he concluded, was who was president rather than who were electors.[28]

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[26]Everett to Alexander Everett 10 December 1831, EEP.

[27]Everett to President Kirkland, 20 March 1832, EEP, vol. 66.

[28]Everett to Joseph McIlwaine, 24 May 1832, EEP, vol.66.

By October, Clay's candidacy seemed entirely hopeless. Before the National Convention meeting at Worcester, Everett continued his bridge building toward the Anti-Mason party. In addressing the convention, the congressman from Middlesex County called upon the electors to vote for Mr. Wirt if it appeared Clay could not be elected. As the election drew near, both Edward and his brother Alexander, believing now that only damage could come from perseverance, decided to ask Clay to withdraw.[29]

In their letter, the Everetts set forth their view of the political situation. Either Andrew Jackson would be chosen by the electors, or neither of the three candidates would receive a majority. If, on the other hand, their friends were to vote for Wirt, the Anti-Mason candidate, they told Clay, his election by the people might be possible. The only way in which to convince the friends of Clay to go for Wirt, they concluded, was for Clay to publicly withdraw his name. Only in this way could the electors be convinced that such a course was expedient.[30] Clay, however, could not be convinced of this not very realistic argument and in November, 1832 Andrew Jackson was elected for another four years.

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[29]"Diary," 27 October 1832, 29 October 1832, EEP, vol. 145.

[30]Everett to Clay, 29 October 1832, EEP, vol. 66.

While the election of 1832 for the moment dimmed Henry Clay's presidential aspirations, for Edward Everett it proved a political stepping stone. Although his actions during the last month of the campaign gained him the wrath of Clay's supporters, he earned the good graces of the Anti-Mason party.[31] In fact, the hostility he encountered from Masons hardly bothered him as he saw political capital from such enemies. And by early 1833 he was engaged in establishing strong connections with one of the state's leading Anti-Masons, Benjamin Hallet.[32]

Edward agreed with his brother Alexander that the Anti-Masonic party had become stationary after the election, but cautioned those who believed this to be permanent. The future of this new party was directly related to the actions of Masons. If they refused to disband, if they refused to "sacrifice their ridiculous and senseless institution to the peace of the Country," he wrote, the Anti-Masons would increase their numbers.

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[31]Everett to Alexander Everett, 4 December 1832, Everett to Hon. J. T. Austin, 17 December 1832, EEP, vol. 66.

[32]Everett to Alexander Everett, 18 December 1832; See also, Everett to Samuel Shattuck Esq., 24 December 1832, Everett to Benjamin Hallett, 24 December 1832, March, 1833, EEP, vol. 66.

Thus, by February, 1833, he clearly welcomed the opposition of Masons who would not surrender. "With respect to an anti-masonic opposition to me," he told Alexander, "I rather think it will not take place, particularly if my friends of the masonic mirror abuse me stoutly." "Nothing would suit me better than a Masonic opposition."[33]

Edward Everett's courtship with the Anti-Masonic party, however, never replaced his primary loyalty to the National Republicans. Although he welcomed Anti-Masonic support, he would not accept an independent nomination from that party until nominated by the National Republicans. In April 1833, Everett won a fifth term in Congress.[34] Everett's own political success, however, did not clarify for him the course he or his party should take. Issues were becoming blurred and new ones were emerging. The politics of reason and moderation had been disrupted by this new emotional outburst. "Your dislike of all mere party movements cannot exceed mine," he wrote to Joseph Worcester on July 27, 1833. And two days later to John Marshall he expressed his unhappiness with the state of parties and especially the focus of issues around

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[33]Everett to Alexander Everett, 29 December 1832, 13 February 1833, EEP.

[34]Everett to William Hilliard Esq., 21 March 1833, EEP, vol. 66, "Diary," 12 March 1833, 18 March 1833, 19 March 1833, EEP, vol. 146; See also, Everett to Antimasonic Committee of the County of Middlesex, 12 March 1833, EEP.

Masonry.[35] In addition, Everett had received poor treatment at the hands of some National Republican papers for his opposition to Clay.

During July, Everett solicited views on Masonry and his political position from friends and party leaders. From Webster, he received support for his present activities, though Judge Story suggested he remain neutral on the subject and maintain the position of aloofness from partisanship.[36] Most important was his communication with Justice Marshall on the question of Masonry. As Everett saw it, Marshall's understanding of American institutions could hardly be questioned and his name would give moral weight to any position. Marshall's views were no doubt welcomed as they confirmed Everett's negative opinion.[37]

Everett's earlier thoughts of working within the party which Jackson dominated were now dismissed. While in 1828 he believed that New England could remain dominant in the nation without a reorganization of

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[35]Everett to Joseph Worcester, 27 July 1833, Joseph Worcester Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as JWP); Everett to John Marshall, 29 July 1833, EEP, vol. 66.

[36]"Diary," 25 July 1833, EEP, vol. 146, Story to Everett, 30 July 1833, EEP.

[37]Everett to Chief Justice Marshall, 16 July 1833, 29 July 1833, EEP, vol. 66, John Marshall to Everett, 22 July 1833, EEP; See also, Everett to H. Atwill, 29 June 1833.

parties, Clay's failure in 1832 and the sudden surge of Anti-Masonry changed his mind. The Massachusetts governor's race of 1833 would provide a model, Everett believed, which had national implications. The state contest in 1832 had proved to him that the two major factions in the state could no longer be reconciled. Furthermore, analysis showed that neither of the three parties could carry the state alone. The alternatives, therefore, were simple: either align with the Jacksonian element and elect Marcus Morton, or unite with the Anti-Masons and choose a National Republican.[38]

For Everett, the choice was clear. Since there was no hope of support for Morton from friends, he wrote, the first alternative was a moot point. Further, endorsing Morton only tended to enhance Van Buren's position within the state. On the other hand, if it was decided to put forth a separate National Republican candidate, it would force the election into the General Court. Though this course would gain a Republican governor, it would continue the struggle with the Anti-Mason party and hinder any future alliance, Everett warned. Running a separate candidate also overlooked a real possibility that Jacksonians and Anti-Masons would form a coalition to elect Morton and thus turn the

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[38]Everett to Webster (Private), 9 August 1833, EEP.

Anti-Masonic vote over to Van Buren in 1836.

Only one alternative remained, advised Everett. The National Republicans must unite with the Anti-Masons. He believed his plan the only one certain, or even likely, to prevent Morton's selection: it was the only one with good prospects for the future.[39] Only two men in the state could provide such leadership, he concluded, John Quincy Adams and himself. In all likelihood, Adams would decline the Anti-Masonic nomination, Everett believed. Only his nomination remained. Of course, Everett informed Webster that he would not accept the Anti-Masonic nomination unless a favorable reply came from the National Republicans. He now awaited Webster's opinion on the matter.[40]

Webster's response was sent two days later. Though he fully supported Everett's political ambitions, he thought that the present state of party feeling precluded any joint nomination. If the Anti-Masons nominated Everett in September, he wrote, it would be doubtful that the National Republicans would follow suit in October. Most likely they would nominate either John Davis or William B. Calhoun. Under these circumstances, Webster predicted, the Republican candidate would be elected by the General Court, but the cost would be the

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

destruction of Republican power in Massachusetts. "My advice is, to decline the nomination."[41]

Under these circumstances, Everett was left little choice. His call for a coalition with the Anti-Masons in 1832 still lingered in the minds of some Masonic Republicans. But more importantly, many did not feel the urgency of a joint endorsement. In contrast to Everett's prediction, John Quincy Adams did accept the Anti-Masonic nomination, and John Davis received the support of the National Republicans, as Webster had prophesized. That year, with Marcus Morton running as a Democrat and Samuel C. Allen appearing on the ticket of the Working-men's party, none of the four candidates obtained the necessary majority. Finally, Adams threw his support to Davis, thus guaranteeing his election by the General Court.[42]

But if Everett had been prevented from achieving his goal in 1833, events of the next two years proved more auspicious. On the one hand, there was the decline and fragmentation of the Anti-Masonic movement in Massachusetts. As the traditional political questions emerged once again, elements within the Anti-Mason party

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[41]Webster to Everett, 11 August 1833, EEP.

[42]Darling, Massachusetts, p. 115. The results of the election of November 1833: John Davis, 25,149, Marcus Morton, 15,493, J. Q. Adams, 18,274, S. C. Allen, 3,459.

were drawn to the other two groups. In 1834 John Davis was elected to his second term as Governor without the support of the Anti-Masons. By 1834 two new parties, Democrats and Whigs, sought to gather the remnants of the Anti-Masons.[43]

Though Everett had been blocked in 1833, he continued to build bridges to the Anti-Masons. When, for example, the Atlas, which many viewed as the political voice of the National Republican party, abused John Q. Adams for his Anti-Masonry, Everett wrote a letter to General Dearborn strongly protesting this attack.[44] Davis' success in '34 he interpreted as evidence to support his case.[45]

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[43]The election of Governor in 1834: J. David (N. Rep) 44, 802, M. Morton (Dem), 19,255, John Bailey (A.M.) 10,795, S.C. Allen (Work Men's P) 2,602. Darling, Massachusetts, p. 127. In the election of 1834 the name "Whig Party" was used for the first time. This name, however, seemed to hold little significance for Everett. For him, the choice of the name merely designated the group which had emerged after the second election of Jackson and which had its roots in the defeat of Adams in 1828. In fact, the first mention of "Whig" appeared in Everett's "Diary" on August 9, 1834 when he mentioned attending a "whig dinner." "Diary," 9 August 1834, EEP, vol. 147; Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 128-129.

[44]Everett to General Dearborn, 19 October 1833, EEP,

[45]Everett to Robert C. Winthrop, 17 December 1834, Robert C. Winthrop Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as RCWP); See also, Everett to John Sargent, (Confidential), 17 December 1834, Everett to Sargent, 22 December 1834, John Sargent Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as JSAP), vol. I.

By the end of 1834, Everett began once more to reevaluate his own political life and his position within the new Whig party. To John Sargent he confided his desire to retire from the House. Separation from his wife and from his children, who were reaching the age when they required his aid in their education, could no longer be tolerated. While denying the move was politically motivated, Everett offered his name for the Senate seat vacated by Nathaniel Silsbee. Though he recognized that Mr. Bates, Governor Levi Lincoln, and Henry Shaw preferred the position, and he would not stand in their way, he, nevertheless, felt his candidacy would receive the support of many within the state.[46]

Once again, Everett's goal was confounded by the political ambitions of senior members of the party. John Sargent informed Everett three days later that Governor Davis had unexpectedly voiced his feelings for the seat and Everett could not hope to gain support against him. This Everett fully understood, but he rejected Sargent's advice that he wait until Webster vacated his senatorial seat upon entering the presidential race. If the option were available, he responded, he would prefer the position of governor. This would enable him to meet his

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[46]Everett to Sargent (Confidential) 17 December 1834, JSaP, Vol. I.

commitments at home.[47]

Davis' decision to become senator, however, had also created a condition in which Everett's political assets were magnified. Behind this struggle over state power lay the question of national politics. The choice of president in 1836 and New England's position within the nation remained paramount. News of Governor Davis' decision received strong opposition from John Quincy Adams and Levi Lincoln, the latter believing that Davis could not have been re-elected governor in November. Even Everett's meeting with Adams could not convince these men of the wisdom of the choice.[48] For Daniel Webster the widening gap between Adams and himself, the divisiveness within the Whig party, and Adams' influence with Anti-Masons certainly created a major obstacle for his presidential aspirations.

Amidst this growing confusion Everett's position improved. During the political maneuvering, Everett maintained his relationship with the Adams family. His

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[47] Ibid., Sargent to Everett, 26 December 1834, JSaP, vol. I. The word "unexpected" implies that Everett had no knowledge of this decision previously. The "deal" which Charles Francis Adams believed was made between Webster (for President), John Davis (for Senator) and Everett (for Governor) perhaps occurred after this letter was sent. Martin Duberman, Charles Francis Adams, 1807-1886. (Stanford, 1960), p. 53.

[48] "Diary," 9 February 1835, 10 February 1835, EEP, vol. 147; Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 119-120, 184-187.

support of the Adams administration could not be forgotten and the families were brought closer together with the marriage of Charles Francis Adams to Everett's sister-in-law. Furthermore, with Alexander Everett aligning himself with the Adams' group, Edward Everett was given additional leverage. Of course, Everett's continued friendship with the Anti-Masonic leader, Benjamin Hallett, added to his worth, while his anti-Jackson position on the French spoilation issue regained the support of most Whigs. The Boston Advocate and Essex Register both recorded that Everett's exposition of the various matters between the United States and France provided their readers with much pleasure. Thus, by the summer of 1835, Everett could support Webster for president and still maintain the good will of John Quincy Adams and the Anti-Masons.[49]

When Everett accepted the Anti-Masonic nomination for governor in June, 1835, there was no opposition from the Whigs. He made it clear that his acceptance was only the first part of an agreed-upon joint nomination.[50] Nor did Webster caution him against such a move. For the candidacy of Everett provided the opportunity for Webster's entering the election of 1836 with a unified party and the support of Anti-Masonic elements. Except for the Anti-mason Taunton Gazette, Everett received the support of

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[49]"Diary," 1 April 1835, 19 June 1835, EEP, vol. 147, Everett to Alexander Everett, 22 April 1835, EEP, Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 184-187; Boston Advocate, March 9, 1835, Essex Register, March 9, 1835.

[50]Everett to Benjamin Hallett, Esq., 5 October 1835, EEP, Everett to Hon D.I. Pierce, 6 June 1835, EEP, vol. 66, Everett to B. Hallett (Private), 5 October 1835, EEP, vol. 66.

almost all the Whig and Antimasonic papers. The Essex Register, the Massachusetts Spy, The Herald, The Atlas and the Concord Freeman all endorsed the middlesex congressman. After his successful race, Everett wrote to F. R. Gourgas, the editor of the Concord Freeman, recounting his special role.

> When the nomination of the Antimasons was tendered to me, it was with the express assurance, that my political opinions form no objection to me, on the part of those from who the nomination proceeded. This circumstance led me to hope, that I might be instrumental in softening some of the asperities of party in the Commonwealth: - And bringing good citizens who really have but one sentiment of attachment to the country in their hearts into cordial co-operation with each other.[51]

Everett's "grand design" however, never materialized. By the election of 1836, Everett's relationship with the Anti-Mason leader Benjamin Hallett had become strained as it was apparent that Anti-Masons would support Van Buren. Furthermore, Everett now admitted that the breach between Adams and Webster was "irrevocable."[52]

Though the nullification crisis of 1828 had generated a strong nationalist feeling in Everett, the challenges to New England's influence tended to dominate his thoughts during the years between 1828 and 1834. His attempts to preserve New England's power not only submerged his nationalism but often shaped his nationalist ideology. The new political climate, it appeared would be more

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[51]Everett to F. R. Gourgas Esq., Editor of the Concord Freeman, 23 November 1835, EEP, vol. 66A;See also, Everett to Hallett, 5 October 1835, EEP. The results of the contest: Everett (Whig-A.M.) 37,555, M. Morton (Dem) 25,227, S. Armstrong (Ind) 1,901,Scattering, 220. Everett received 7,200 fewer votes than Davis in 1834. Darling, Massachusetts, p. 191. Essex Register, March 2, 1835, Massachusetts Spy, February 11, 1835, The Herald, February 10, 1835, The Atlas, February 27, 1835.

[52]Everett to Hon Thaddeus Stevens, Esq., 20 October

conducive to his nationalism. Though Everett's friends had failed to capture the White House, and Everett had not fully resolved the growth of western power, his fears of political isolation were temporarily soothed. Two national parties had emerged out of the political fragmentation of the previous years. Within the new Whig organization his own political position, as well as his sections, were secure. The disruptive and emotional Anti-Masonic movement, in addition, had dissipated. "King Andrew" had retired, and it appeared that politics would return to the more significant national questions of the day.

1835, Everett to Hon. H. Denny Pitts, 20 October 1835, EEP, vol. 66A; See also, Everett to Hallett, 14 December 1835 (Private), EEP, vol. 67.

CHAPTER VII

PRESERVATION THROUGH NATIONAL IDEOLOGY

The outward unity generated by Everett's successful race in November 1835 did not last. The peculiar political antagonisms and factions which, in part, were responsible for his success soon caused him much grief. Two days before the election he sensed the future. "As things are," he wrote to Alexander,

> I am not only placed in the situation of being in great danger alternately of losing my most active supporters, on both sides, from their hostility on every other point; but if I succeed in the election, I have the prospect of an administration rendered by the same cause the source of eternal torment.... My only consolation is that I am rendered by it indifferent to that event, which is no unlikely result of the schism which has sprung up between the parties, which nominated me.[1]

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[1]Everett to Alexander Everett, 2 November 1835, Everett to F. R. Gourgas Esq., Editor of the Concord Freeman, 23 November 1835, EEP, vol. 66A, Everett to Charles A. Davis, Esq., 14 November 1835, EEP, vol. 67.

The hostility which Everett encountered during his first year was not totally without cause. His association with the Anti-Mason party underwent severe strain when news of his appointments became known. To the position of judge of probate he appointed Ira Barton, a Mason. In addition, his appointments for register of probate and to the law commission turned out to be Masons. Although Everett acknowledged this to be true, he argued that these men had separated themselves from the organization. Barton had openly called for abandonment of the institution in 1834.[2]

Everett believed, with some justification, that this Anti-Mason hostility was due to his connection with Webster. His appointment of Masons had furnished "those who wished to carry over the Antimasons to V.B. with a plausible pretext for assailing my administration, with which under present circumstances the success of the Webster electoral ticket in Mass. is identified." Once the Anti-Masonic party nominated Van Buren for President, Everett found it difficult to find men from that group who "were suitable and not politically

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[2]Everett to Hon W. Jackson, 24 September, 1836, Everett to Hon John Reed, (Extract) 21 April 1836, Everett to Hon. J.C. Bates (Private) 26 April, 1836, Everett to Hon George Greunell, 15 July 1836, Everett to Judge Story, 29 April 1836, Everett to Judge Ira Barton, 11 May 1836, EEP, vol. 67.

objectionable."[3] Professor Arthur Darling's observation that Everett's appointments showed a more favorable attitude toward Whigs than Anti-Masons is certainly valid, but few could have thought that Everett's allegiance had shifted during these years of party disorder. As Everett stated, there was never any intention on his part to remain neutral between Webster and Van Buren.[4]

In fact, Everett's political action during these years had been completely shaped by his desire to secure for Daniel Webster and thus New England the support of the Anti-Masons. His initial success only confused Everett's poor understanding of the forces generating anti-Masonry. He perceived only the political manifestations of its later development and never recognized the movement as an expression of the American conscience. Likewise, he failed to understand the meaning of abolitionism which emerged during the period, though he was quick to recognize its disruptive political quality.

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[3]Everett to Hon John Reed (Extract) 21 April 1836, Everett to John Davis Williams, Esq., 13 September 1836, EEP, vol. 67.

[4]Everett to Thorphilus Parsons, Esq., 4 March 1836, EEP, vol. 67; Darling, Massachusetts, p. 193.

Fully attached to the present political order, Everett attacked the abolitionists who sought to "disturb the relations" created by the original compact. The actions of the abolitionists, he argued in his first inaugural address, would only lead to disaster for both the slave population and the nation. Because Everett's central interest was to preserve the established political and social order, he saw in the slave issue renewed sectional hostility and a threat to New England's national position.

But here was an instance in which Everett's nationalism and sectionalism were in harmony. Not only did the slave issue portend party disorder, but Everett believed, the topic could only prove to be "the rock on which the Union would split." Leave the subject where the Constitution left it, was his advice, with the states where it exists and in the "hands of an all wise Providence."[5] In addition, this policy produced an environment conducive to his own temper. The world of moderation, order, and rationality, he believed, were reflected in the present order of things.[6]

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[5]Edward Everett, "Address of His Excellency to the Two Branches of the Legislature On the Organization of the Government for the Political Year Commencing January 6, 1836," pp. 29-34.

[6]He received letters of congratulations from many, but most significantly from Daniel Webster and James Madison. Webster to Everett, 27 January 1836, James Madison to Everett, 30 January 1836, EEP.

Everett's objection to any disruptive elements led him, March 1837, to admonish his nephew Nathan Hale, who was editor of the Boston Daily Advertizer. While he considered the abolitionist movement "a detestable game of hypocrisy," played "by agitators of that subject," he critized Hale's extreme attack on the "abolition frenzy." Such language, he felt, would tend to irritate rather than persuade. "Believing as I do," he advised, "that the Union is on the verge of dissolution, & that we are approaching a state of things as calamitous as the world ever witnessed, I feel deeply anxious to avoid everything which can feed the angry feelings, & add bitterness to passions already too much excited."[7]

Everett's fears for the Union and his hostility to extremism were not temporary strictures. In two letters written to Sir Robert Peel during 1837, he expressed these concerns and expressed little hope for his policy of moderation. "This is now the great evil that afflicts us" he wrote in March, "the struggle between the rights and interests of the Southern States, as independent governments tolerating slavery and the public sentiment of the North, in unison with that of the

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[7]Everett to Mr. Hale, 3 March 1837, EEP, vol. 67. On March 7, 1837 after receiving Van Buren's inaugural address and reading the section concerning slavery, Everett wrote, "a temperate and judicious document in which particularly the difficult topic of slavery is treated with great discretion." "Diary," 7 March 1837, EEP, vol. 149.

civilized world straining towards its removal, but checked by the stipulations of the federal Constitution which recognizes its existence."[8] Mob violence and riots, occurring in both North and South, he pointed out, were directly related to slavery agitation. Because of this violence, the abolitionists were fast becoming a powerful, resolute and confident faction. If the abolitionists were to gain control of Congress and proceeded to carry out the policy of an emancipation without the consent of the masters, he told Peel, the Union of states would dissolve.[9]

What made the issue so complex, and thus dangerous, was the inability of those who saw the evil of slavery to rectify it through the channels of government. The principal difficulty, he wrote in October, was that the federal government had no power to interfere with slavery in the states. "You easily judge how little likely the Southern States are to take voluntary measures to get rid of an institution, which forms the basis of all their property & of considerable portion of their representative power in the Union."[10]

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[8]Everett to Sir Robert Peel, 29 March 1837, EEP, vol. 67.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Everett to Peel, 3 October 1837, EEP, vol. 66.

Everett's position on slavery had not gone unnoticed. The national election had provided the backdrop for the 1836 race and both Webster and Everett were successful in carrying the state. In 1837 the Massachusetts Democrats, looking for a campaign issue to counter the Whig attack on the economic crisis of 1837, pointed to Everett's appointments of Masons as an indication of his aristocratic disposition. But this failed to create the necessary enthusiasm. Then, on the eve of the election, Benjamin Hallett raised the question of slavery, an issue most politicians had sought to avoid. Everett's 1826 pronouncement on slave insurrections became the center of controversy.[11]

By October 31, 1837, the situation had become so acute that Everett was forced to clarify his position in an open letter to William Jackson. To the question of whether he supported emancipation, Everett wrote this response:

> I observe, that Slavery being, by Universal admission, a social, political, & moral evil of the first magnitude - it is required by justice, humanity, & sound policy alike that the Slaves should be emancipated, by those having the power constitutionally to effect that object, as soon as it can be done peacefully, and in a manner to better the condition of the emancipated. I believe the most considerate portion of the people of the United States, in every quarter, unite in this

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[11]Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 200-212.

> sentiment, if you are aware that the most eminent Southern names can be cited in its support.

The second question concerned the course to be pursued respecting emancipation specifically in the District of Columbia. Everett said he favored emancipation by "an act of Congress." In response to the last question which referred to the annexation of Texas and the presence of slavery in that area, Everett suggested a policy toward Texas which was "voluntary & gratuitous." Furthermore, he warned that if the United States rushed into a policy of giving an indefinite extension to slavery "we should stand condemned before the civilized world."[12]

This response perhaps did not satisfy the extreme abolitionists, but the positive results of the election indicated that most voters of Massachusetts accepted Everett's position or cared little about the issue. That year he received a majority of 17,000 votes which was an increase of 10,000 over the previous year.[13]

If for the moment Everett had successfully come to terms with the abolitionist spirit, the general mood for social change could not be as easily tamed. As

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[12]Everett to Hon William Jackson, 32 October 1837, EEP.

[13]Darling, Massachusetts, p. 212.

Everett saw it, these movements at their root were seeking to alter the fundamental structure of the American system and, by its intimate connection to it, the American character. While in the past Everett's discussion of the American system had centered on its political organization, these attacks on the nation's social institutions caused him to set forth a clearer definition of the American character and America's social institutions.

In February 1834, well in the aftermath of Jackson's Bank veto, Everett described the combatants in a letter to Thomas W. Ward. "The present contest is nothing less than a war of numbers against property." "The tone of the government papers in Washington, New York, and Boston shows that this policy is to be carried on in the proscriptive and remorseless spirit of the French revolution," he concluded.[14] Praising Daniel Webster's stand against such forces, Everett defined the combatants in this struggle. On the one hand were the forces of "property and intelligence," of "order and law." These were daily doing battle with those "artful demagogues" who "beguile the people," the "levellers" who sought to trample the "professions and institutions of the country."[15]

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[14]Everett to Thomas Ward, (private) 18 February 1834, Thomas Ward Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society (1832-1836) (hereafter cited as TWP).

[15]Ibid.

Five years later, as governor of Massachusetts, confronted with charges of elitism, Everett showed that his aversion to the "new democracy" had not diminished. Once again, Everett defined the issues in political terms. He believed that behind this "modern pseudo-democracy" lay a political clique bent on corrupting public opinion for their own political advantage. With their "cloudy generalities" they sought to create the impression that society, here as in parts of Europe, consisted of two classes, "the poor oppressed many & the haughty rich few & their mercenary dependents."[16] No doubt, to many Everett represented the "mercenary dependents." Although in 1828 Everett, writing to his brother, denied his identification with the ruling class, these remarks clearly show an identification with it.[17] In 1834 Everett called on Thomas Ward and one hundred others to rally behind "property and intelligence," for each to contribute a $1000 to their defender, Daniel Webster.[18]

The rise of the "common man," symbolized by Jackson's ascendency, the rhetoric of egalitarianism and class conflict, the attacks on wealth, frightened Everett.

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[16]Everett to B. F. Presbury and Others, Committee at Taunton, 27 June 1839, EEP, vol. 68.

[17]Everett to Alexander Everett, 19 June 1828, EEP, vol. 62.

[18]Everett to Thomas Ward (Private) 18 February 1834, TWP.

The validity of the nationalist mystique was implicitly challenged. If diverse social and economic groups with antagonistic views were emerging from the shaping process of the Union how could it be claimed that the union was the primal force of national consciousness.[19] It was imperative on two levels, therefore, that Everett confront the polarities. First as a political tactic to maintain the status quo and secondly as an intellectual problem in his nationalist ideology. In 1830 he addressed himself to the newly organized workingmen's parties and their philosophy. Where these new organizations had used the concept "workingmen" to divide men into social groups, Everett defined the concept of work as a natural manifestation of man. As Everett saw it, the history of man's progress indicated that his capacity to want did not diminish, but rather had undergone transformation. With the development of machines man had been able to satisfy his primary wants with less labor, but there was a curious provision of nature which directed man's attention to artificial or rather civilized wants once the natural wants were provided for. Want is a necessary

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[19]Walter Hugins, Jacksonian Democracy and the Working Class (Stanford, 1960).

factor for man's improvement. Reflecting his Calvinist view of reality, Everett said; "Man, whether seen in a savage or a civilized state, in a primitive or a highly improved condition, was a working being. It is his destiny, the law of his nature, to labor."[20]

The categories of employer and employee, therefore, were artificial. All who used the same instruments, the "organs of the body and the powers of the mind," were considered workers. He would, however, exclude all "bad men," those who acted for immoral and unlawful ends; all "idlers," by which he meant those whose time was not devoted to providing for their family; and finally all "busybodies," those who pursued no honest creditable employment, from the ranks of workers or from membership in any Workingmen's Party. If all these were shut out, the Workingmen's Party would include all those who, by any kind of honest industry, employed the talent which the Creator had given them. All these men formed one party, one great, comprehensive society, and this by the very law of our nature.[21]

Addressing himself to the inclination of some "working men" to enter, and by Everett's definition,

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[20]Edward Everett, "Lecture on the Workingman's Party," October, 1830, Orations, 1:284-285.

[21]Ibid., pp. 290, 294, 303.

disrupt the political scene, he argued that the function of the Workingmen's party should not be to carry out political selections, nor to elevate a particular candidate for office. Rather, "to promote the prosperity and welfare of the workingmen; that is, to obtain for every man disposed to work the greatest freedom in the choice of his pursuit, the greatest encouragement and aid in pursuing it, the greatest security in enjoying its fruits; in other words, to make work, in the greatest possible degree, produce happiness."[22]

Everett's identification with the interests of the propertied class and his hostility to polarity continued to shape his thought. If he tried to transform the concept of "workingmen" into a human characteristic, thus a national one as well, the unequal distribution of wealth, some were claiming, was destroying the American principle of equality. A new aristocracy, one of wealth, had emerged and was threatening the American experiment. Furthermore, by 1838, the year of Everett's major oration on the nature of accumulation, his own administration was being severely challenged for its class orientation.[23] Everett's intellectual task was clear:

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[22] Ibid., pp. 287-288; See also, Everett to Samuel Whitcomb jr. Esq., 19 October 1830, EEP, Edward Everett, "American Manufacturers," 14 October 1831, Orations, 2:78-79.

[23] Jackson's vote that the Bank linked accumulators with a foreign clique seeming to exploit the nation. Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 239-240.

show that the act of accumulating wealth was in essence an American characteristic.

Though in September 1838, Everett expressed his ideas systematically for the first time, seven years earlier had told John Taylor that accumulation was the natural consequence of those "values" upon which the country was built. "When we consider that, in this country property can rarely be acquired or preserved, in any considerable amount, without industry, temperance, & frugality, the Origin of larger accumulations must be allowed to be entitled to favorable regard."[24]

From the standpoint of progress, accumulation provided that source of capital necessary to the growth of the economy. Without accumulation, therefore, there would not be the great movements in our society. Without private investment there would be no growth in the mechanical arts, or in manufactures; there would be no private improvements and no enterprises of utility, and most important, no domestic exchanges and foreign commerce. As all commerce rested on accumulation, only through exchanges of commerce could everybody benefit from the accumulations of the individual. Until the individual exchanged his accumulations, they were of no actual value to him. Since capital was the mainspring of business

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[24]Everett to Taylor, 11 June 1831, EEP, Everett, "Accumulation, Property, Capital, Credit," 13 September 1838, Orations, 2:294.

operations in a civilized society, Everett concluded, why should there be an outcry against it.[25]

By 1838, however, Everett had added a new and significant dimension to his case for homogeneity. Now he portrayed the great American dream, social mobility, as dependent upon the law of accumulation. The very essence of private property, he began, was accumulation. "In order to carry on this system of exchanges, it was necessary that the articles accumulated should be safe in the hands of their owners. The laws of society, for the protection of property, were founded upon the early and instinctive observation of this truth." If one hoped to move up the social ladder, to elevate himself from "barbarism," it was necessary that he accumulate capital.[26] To denounce wealth was to reject evolution, social mobility and the American way. To treat poverty with distaste, Everett added parenthetically, was to reject one's heritage.[27]

What makes Everett's resolution of these economic and social polarities significant in a study of his

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[25]Everett, "Accumulations," pp. 289-290, 293, 297-298, 303; See also, Everett, "John Lowell jr.," 31 December 1839, Orations, 2:387-388, Everett to Taylor, 11 June 1831, EEP, Everett, "Accumulations," 13 September 1838, pp. 293, 297-98.

[26]Everett, "Accumulations," p. 291.

[27]Ibid.

nationalism is the implicit definition of an American which emerged. The argument that "frugality, temperance and industry" were American values and were the values which shaped this country suggests that his nationalist vision was more often than not, New England "writ large." In fact, Everett's concepts of the American character were not abstracted from the realities of American life but were projections of his own value system.

In George Washington, who was always to remain the archetype for all others, and "whose principles and example," he thought, "are a precious legacy, not merely to Americans, but to the world," Everett saw a man who refused to waste his youth on "those detestable indulgences miscalled pleasures, in which the flower of adolescence so often languishes and pines away ...."[28] It was Washington, wrote Everett in 1838, who was the perfection of the "Prudent man" and whose use of power teaches the virtue of restraint.[29] He praised both Henry Clay and Benjamin Franklin for their commitment to the industrious life. In 1827 he wrote of Clay that he belonged to that class of men who "rise to eminence by the force of talent

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[28]Edward Everett, "The Youth of George Washington," 4 July 1835, Orations 1:580-582; See also, Edward Everett, "Jared Sparks' Washington," North American Review 47 (October, 1838): 360-363.

[29]Everett, "Sparks," p. 365; See also, Everett, "Youth of Washington," Orations, 1:564.

and industry." In Franklin's life he saw the personification of the work ethic.[30] During the years of Everett's governorship the interplay of sectionalism and nationalism became most obvious. All of New England's particular characteristics were transformed into national values. It was the Pilgrim's "strong religious sense" which generated the "forms and institutions of civil society," Everett said in May 1836.[31] They were the harbinger of liberty and the republican form of government.[32]

Commenting on the publication of de Tocqueville's Democracy in America, Everett welcomed the author's perceptive remarks on the nature of American stability as it related to the **propagation** of religious ideas. "How much of the predominant religious character described by him," noted Everett, "is to be referred to the influence and example of our forefathers, -- the men who settled New England."[33] And if Washington, Franklin and

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[30]Edward Everett, "The Speeches of Henry Clay," North American Review 25 (October, 1827):443, Edward Everett, "The Boyhood and Youth of Franklin," November, 1829, Orations, 2: in passim.

[31]Edward Everett, "Anniversary of the Settlement of Springfield," 25 May 1836, Orations, 2:157; See also, Edward Everett, "The Settlement of Dedham," 21 September 1826, Orations, 2:182, Everett, "Bloody Brook," Orations, 1:668, Edward Everett, "Address of His Excellency... January 6, 1836," p. 4.

[32]Everett, "Bloody Brook," p. 664.

[33]Everett, "Springfield," Orations, 2:158-159.

Clay personified the American as industrious and prudent, who could deny that it was the Yankee worker who provided the initial model. Speaking on the phenomenal growth of the West in the fall of 1835, Everett's sectional chauvinism was evident.

> ...a settler did not think himself well accounted without a Leominster axe. But give him that, give him sir, that weapon which has brought a wider realm into the pale of civilization than the sword of Caesar or the sceptre of Justinian, give him a narrow Yankee axe, - he'll hew his way with it to a living, in a season; though I shrewdly suspect, without the least disparagement of emigrants from other quarters, that after sending the Yankee axe into the country, the best way to give it full effect would be to send a little Yankee bone and sinew to facilitate its use.[34]

Maintenance and extension of the condition of the New England yeoman, said Everett, provided the best way to insure the calm, orderly, intelligent exercise and control of political power. "I know no manner in which such a distribution can be permanently and peacefully effected, but by keeping the land in small farms, suitable to be cultivated by their owner."[35] It was under such a system of land ownership, he said, that one could expect the people to exercise their rights with independence. But as in earlier cases, Everett's

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[34]Edward Everett, "The Western Railroad," 7 October 1835, Orations, 2:145; See also, pp. 142-143.

[35]Edward Everett, "Agriculture," 16 October 1833, Orations, 1:455-457.

conception of the yeomen was more in tune with Edward Everett as yeomen than the reality of the New England yeomen. In New England, the husbandman, imbued with a strong foundation of religious principles planted by the Pilgrim Fathers, whose daily experience with the soil strengthened the sense of the mysterious creative powers, was best equipped to "leave behind...a posterity competent not only to preserve and assert, but to augment and improve, their heritage." It was upon the shoulders of the husbandmen, Everett surmised, that the social, political, and moral character of countries, the life-spring of the national character, depended.[36]

As the yeomanry of New England provided those moral virtues of stability, and independence of action, those involved in the mechanical arts were the vehicle of progress. "Mind, acting through the useful art," said Everett, "is the vital principle of modern civilized society." "The cause of human improvement has no firmer or more powerful friends."[37] New England's population, engaged in both manufacturing and agriculture produced the true American character. Although Washington was a

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[36] Ibid., pp. 456-457, Edward Everett, "Cattle Show at Danvers," 28 September 1836, Orations, 2:185, 188-189.

[37] Edward Everett, "The Importance of the Mechanic Arts," 20 September 1837, Orations, 2:252-253, 255.

slaveholder, it was never mentioned. And, in 1826, when writing of Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, Everett consciously separated him from the slaveholding class and indicated his affiliation with the "substantial yeomanry."[38] The character of the American that emerged from Everett's thinking, therefore, was hardly distinguishable from that of the New England Yankee.

These concepts of the national character, however, point out more than the interplay between sectionalism and nationalism. Everett's sectionalism alone must be modified. It is obvious from Everett's descriptions of the New England workingman and yeoman that he never understood who they were nor could he identify with them. He was a Brahmin, Harvard educated, and cultured. His image of the New England type was a projection of his own life style and class.

Everett was an intellectual at heart and always revered formal education. During his years as governor of Massachusetts, the state's educational system entered upon a revolutionary course under the direction of Horace Mann. Everett, in later years, felt he had not been given just recognition for his role in the experiment, and although it is outside the purview of this study to

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[38]Everett, "Richard H. Lee," NAR, pp. 379-380; See also, Everett, "Agriculture," Orations, 1:452-453. In this oration Everett rejected the large plantation as the best method of dividing land.

investigate such a claim, his contribution should be noted. Everett's keen interest in education, especially as governor made any innovation on Mann's part more palatable to the general public.

In October, 1838, speaking before a gathering in Taunton, Massachusetts, Everett spoke about education. Unless the growth in wealth, he warned, was accompanied by a growth in the taste for reading and reflection, Americans would find themselves with a "Carthaginian prosperity." "Let us give our children the keys of knowledge," he said, "as well as an establishment in business." It was important for children to form habits and tastes which they will be able to take with them into old age. This would enable them to sit with their family and discuss the productions and institutions of their own and foreign countries, the history of their venerated fathers, the experience of their race, and the wonders of the material universe. "Let us, from early years, teach our children to rise above the dust beneath their feet, to the consideration of the great spiritual concerns of immortal natures. A bookworm is a worthless character; but a mere money-getter is no better."[39]

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[39]Edward Everett, "The Importance of Education in A Republic," 10 October 1838, Orations, 2:320-321; See also, Edward Everett, "The Education of Mankind," 20 August 1833, Orations, 1:407-413, Edward Everett, "Superior and Popular Education, 16 August 1837, Orations, 2:230, Edward Everett, "The Boston Schools," 23 August 1837, Orations, 2:237, Everett, "Education in a Republic," p. 324, Everett,

Everett's true American, therefore, was not only the man who accumulated a fortune within the framework of "valid work" but was a refined, cultured individual as well. His praise of John Lowell, Jr., in December, 1839, went beyond his economic achievements. As Everett noted, his range of general reading and his attainments in scholarship went beyond the "common pale."[40]

Everett's support of public education, however, contained other ramifications. Always in the shadow of his thoughts was the development of the national character and concern over New England's power. Education served two functions in society, he said to those gathered at Williams College on August 16, 1837: "One regards the discipline and training of mind to the highest point of intellectual excellence, and the other regards the diffusion of useful knowledge among the community at large, and the consequent elevation of the general character."[41] The propagation of "useful knowledge" and the uplifting of the "general character" were sound tools in pacifying the social unrest exhibited since the presidency of Jackson.

"Mechanical Arts," pp. 239, 253, Everett to R. H. Wilde Esq., 14 January, EEP, vol. 67.

[40]Everett, "John Lowell," Orations, 2:413.

[41]Everett, "Popular Education," Orations, 2:212, Emphasis mine.

Of special concern to the Brahmins was the large influx of lower-class Irish immigrants filling the ranks of the working-class in Boston and Lowell. "I have looked with anxiety to the possibility that our large manufacturing towns may eventually resemble those of England and the European continent generally in becoming the abode of an uneducated, vicious and physically degenerate race," Everett wrote to Judge Banister in October, 1837.[42] Though universal suffrage was the "master principle of our politics," he wrote in the North American Review in July, 1836, the danger of degeneracy under the sway of demagogues who enlist the uniformed and unprincipled to their cause was the great burden. "The most effectual remedy must be sought in universal education."[43]

Addressing himself to the teachers of the Normal Schools, he spoke of their obligation not only to read and speak the English language with propriety and ease, and to possess a clear, shapely, and rapid handwriting and an understanding of the "elemental principles and operations of numbers" but of the "all-important subject

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[42]Everett to Hon. W. B. Banister, 23 October 1837, EEP, vol. 66.

[43]Edward Everett, "Democracy in America," North American Review 43 (July, 1830): 197; See also Everett to Hon. W. B. Banister, 23 October 1837, EEP, vol. 66, Edward Everett, "Education in A Republic," Orations, 2:318-320, Edward Everett, "Education Favorable to Liberty, Knowledge and Morals," 25 August 1835, Orations, 1:603-607. "There are two ways in which liberty is promoted by the general diffusion of knowledge," Everett said in August.

of direct instruction in morals and religion,...."[44] Later in this oration Everett offered an additional insight when he spoke of the function of common schools. "Our common schools are important in the same way as the common air, the common sunshine, the common rain invaluable for their commoness."[45]

Education was the key, therefore, to social levelling. Not the kind of levelling which reformers might insist upon in bringing about a redistribution of power, but a levelling which produced a general acceptance of the status-quo, conformity as Tocqueville called it. As education could preserve order within the social realm, it could also preserve the New England way within the realm of national power. If western expansion was bleeding New England of its political force and implied a transformation of the nation, then the transformation had to be directed. The result would depend greatly upon the type of development which took place in the west. Speaking before a crowded hall in May 1833, Everett spoke somberly of his state's decline. In the year 1800, Ohio sent one member to Congress, while Massachusetts,

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"The first is by disabusing the minds of men of the theoretical frauds by which arbitrary governments are upheld." Ibid.

[44]Edward Everett, "Normal Schools," 5 September 1839, Orations, 2:350-357.

[45]Ibid., pp. 360-362. Emphasis mine.

which included Maine, sent twenty-one. Now thirty-three years later, Ohio sent nineteen and Massachusetts would probably be entitled to little more than a third of that number. The question at hand was of great magnitude. The destiny of the country depended upon the policies the national government would take. Western power was to be harnessed so that it could be used to develop a nation consistent with Everett's own value-system.[46]

During the years of his congressional career and during his governorship, Everett was a major proponent for internal improvements, especially roads and railroads moving from east to west.[47] These connecting links served two functions. The first was the most obvious -- simply one of economic self interest. Endorsing the Boston to Albany Line, Everett felt this would put Boston in its natural place toward trade with the interior. It was not our wish, he said, "to deprive New York of any

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[46]Edward Everett, "Education in the Western States," 21 May 1833, Orations, 1:349-350.

[47]On February 19, 1827 Everett voted in the majority to issue $170,000 for continuence of the Cumberland Road. Register of Debates, 19th Congress, 2nd Session, March 1826/27, pp. 1265-1266; See also, Everett to Theodore Sedgwick, Esq., 24 October 1829, EEP, vol. 65. In this letter Everett voiced his support for the Western Railroad. Everett to A. C. Brown Esq., Chairman of the Corresponding Committee of Internal Improvements, 20 January 1837, EEP, vol. 67; Everett, "Springfield," Orations, 2:369-370.

portion of her legitimate trade; but to regain our own."[48] The great thing wanting to the prosperity of Massachusetts was proper communication with the west. It was true that connection with New Orleans opened to Boston a portion of trade with the interior, he said, but there was a vast region that channel did not reach. While natural connection for intercourse to the north and south were provided, he reminded his listeners in October, 1835, the states' true destiny, social and political, ran from east to west. "Intercourse between the mighty interior west and the sea-coast is the great principle of our commercial prosperity and political strength."[49] Thus the link to the west provided not only economic ties but a funnel through which New England culture might be transplanted. If the west, with its vast geographical territory, with its great populations, was the force of the future, then New England values would be secure if they were stable in the west.[50]

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[48]Everett, "Western Railroad," 7 October, 1835, Orations, 2:146; See also, Everett to Messrs O. W. Rockwell, Mayor of the City of Norwich and W. C. Gilman, President of the Norwich Worcester Railroad, 13 November 1835, EEP, vol. 67.

[49]Edward Everett, "Western Railroad," Orations, 2:145-146.

[50]Everett, "Education in the West," Orations, 1:361; See also Everett, "Normal Schools," Orations, 2:361.

While Everett sought to secure New England culture within an harmonious social condition and in a well shaped national character his own political position in Massachusetts had become tenuous. Though in 1837 the issue of slavery had proven unsuccessful for the Democrats, by 1839 those social forces which Everett sought to quiet proved his nemisis. The influx of Irish workingmen into Massachusetts during the 1830's had intensified the problems of class antagonism, and Everett soon found he could satisfy few while alienating many. The established community was infuriated by his endorsement for reorganization of the state militia which would include a company composed of naturalized Irish. Then there was his failure to veto a bill which eliminated the bounty of five dollars given to members of the Light Infantry. The most important issue, however, and the one which most likely led to Everett's defeat, was the passage of the fifteen gallon law. Though Everett approved the measure, it was certainly not one of his priorities. Nevertheless, once he signed the bill he and his administration was identified with its passage. In essence it became a Whig measure. The law was obviously discriminatory against the lower class for it fixed at fifteen gallons the minimum amount of alcohol to be purchased.[51]

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[51]Everett to Brigadier Gen. Dickenson, 31 March 1838,

If these issues caused dissafection among his supporters, in September, Everett still felt confident of success. "We shall probably succeed by a diminished majority," he wrote Webster.[52] But just a few days before the election, a letter written to Winthrop indicated a deeper concern and a recognition of impending defeat.[53] News of early returns showed that the race was extremely close. By November 12, Everett recognized his defeat. It is "nearly certain that Judge Morton is chosen Gov. by a small majority," he wrote in his diary.[54] Of a total number of 102,066 votes cast for governor, Marcus Morton received 51,034 -- the exact minimum amount required to become governor, one more than half. Although Winthrop and others hoped to make an issue of the election since there were questions about certain votes cast in Westfield, especially one that seemed obviously unconstitutional, Everett, by January, 1840, had resolved to leave office. In his "diary" he wrote that since Morton had received a majority of the vote it would be best that he should take office.[55]

Everett to Osmyn Baker, 10 June 1839, EEP, vol. 68; Everett to Robert C. Winthrop, 26 June 1839, RCWP; Darling, Massachusetts, pp. 239-240.

[52]Everett to Webster, 23 September 1839, EEP, vol. 68.

[53]Everett to Winthrop, 28 October 1839, RCWP.

[54]"Diary," 12 November 1839, EEP, vol. 153.

[55]Everett to Winthrop, 11 January 1840; "Diary," 13 January 1840, EEP, vol. 154; Darling, Massachusetts, p. 241. Marcus Morton received 51,034, Everett received, 50,725.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERNATIONAL ORDER

During the two months following the election, Edward Everett was depressed. But by February, 1840, the tension and mortification of defeat were suppressed beneath the busy work of arranging papers accumulated over the previous fifteen years.[1] As the month came to an end, Everett had clearly resolved his new condition. Although offered the Whig nomination again in 1840, he felt the time had arrived when he must pursue other goals. While pleased with the expression of confidence in him, he recorded that this decision was "an important step in... /his/ life."[2] Also influencing his choice was the fact that Charlotte Everett had developed a serious respiratory problem and was advised to seek a warmer climate. It was decided, therefore, to spend a year or

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[1]Everett to Winthrop, 16 January 1840, Everett to John Burns, 14 February 1840, EEP, vol. 68.

[2]Everett to Winthrop, 28 February 1840, RCWP, "Diary," 29 February 1840, 5 March 1840, EEP, vol. 154.

two in the south of Europe. On June 9, 1840, Everett, his wife, two daughters, and three sons sailed for Europe.[3]

As a political dignitary and scholar of repute, Everett had access to the upper classes of Europe. After his return to America in 1819, he continued to maintain a relationship with those he had met overseas. Therefore, his name continued to be known. Upon his return, however, he was distressed that many of his oldest and closest friends had died. "I pass my own time at the public libraries & in renewing my old acquaintances & making such new ones," he wrote Winthrop. "I am shocked to find how many of those whose society I used to enjoy, twenty-two years ago, are passed from the stage."[4]

His reaction to class conflict in Europe demonstrated that his desire for stability and his aversion to the forces of social change were strongly embedded. His hostility to the working-class movements in America, his disassociation with emotional issues in his own country, were reflected in his response to the workingmen's movements in Paris and London. "The workingmen have paraded in mobs of two or three thousand" he wrote his father-in-law from Paris. "Sharp skirmishes with the

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[3]Everett to Winthrop, 28 February 1840, RCWP, Everett to Horatio Greenough, Esq., 13 March, 1840, Everett to Mr. Torlade d'Azumbriga, 16 March 1840, EEP, vol. 68.

[4]Everett to Winthrop, 27 July 1840, EEP, vol. 69.

police have taken place and the municipal guard has been called out. So great has been the apprehension of a serious interruption of public tranquillity, that several regiments have been recalled from the camp recently formed for autumnal exercise at Fontainebleau."[5] In September, he wrote to Daniel Webster of the recent Chartist uprising. He concluded that the majority of laborers left the mines and mills "without reflection or plan" and were influenced by "the blind instinct" which leads them from time to time "to make this invariably unsuccessful attempt to better their condition. But Everett was critical of those who "gave direction and concert to the movements," who "believed themselves on the eve of a great social convulsion." "No one of them," he believed, "has manifested the slightest portion of the reach of mind or strength of will necessary to control a great political organization."[6]

One and a half months later he again wrote to Webster: This second letter contained a flash of insight:

> Upon the whole, though this movement among the manufacturing population has passed off with less

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[5]Everett to P.C. Brooks, 5 September 1840, EEP, vol. 69; See also, Everett to P.C. Brooks, 24 September 1840, Everett to Winthrop, 27 July 1840, EEP, vol. 69.

[6]Everett to Webster, 1 September 1842, EEP, vol. 45.

> disaster & suffering, than might have been expected, from the great numbers engaged in it; -- the dangerous methods adopted by them to carry their points; and the formidable military force put in motion to suppress them; -- it cannot but be regarded as disclosing a very perilous condition of the working classes, and perhaps something radically unsound and ominous of evertual convulsion in the organization of Society.[7]

In 1844 Everett's aversion to the European working-class was evidenced in his hostility toward the demonstrators of Philadelphia.

> I agree with you in the dangerous character and probable continuance of the disorders in Philadelphia. They are the painful lesson by which Providence is teaching us the folly of sharing all the privileges of American citizenship with the rabble of Europe.[8]

But, in September, 1840, these social and political conditions hardly affected his life. Everett saw himself as a private citizen seeking relief from the turmoil of politics and the warm sun of southern Europe for his ailing wife. Yet this image was not actually true. Although Everett claimed he welcomed his defeat, he continued to maintain ties with those who had influence within the Whig party. This is especially noticeable in respect to increased correspondence with General Harrison during 1840. Immediately after his defeat, Everett informed Harrison that the results in no way measured Whig strength in the state. "The Whig party in the Commonwealth is thoroughly waked up,

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[7]Everett to Webster 19 October 1842, EEP, vol. 45.

[8]Everett to S. Hale, 3 August 1844, EEP, vol. 76.

& not a little mortified at having suffered a surprise. We hope to adjust the great disturbing question of the license law as it is called & animated with the prospect of a national victory; I have no doubt we shall do well. We calculate confidently upon giving you 10,000 majority." Throughout the later months, Everett continued to inform Harrison about continental politics, his meetings with the ruling elite, and his analysis of Anglo-American relations.[9]

The success of the Whigs in November, both nationally and sectionally was viewed by Everett as a vindication of his administration. He also showed signs of an uneasiness, of being lost in Europe. "As the consequence of being left at leisure," he wrote in his diary at the year's end, "I find myself with my family in Europe for an uncertain period and consequently with views somewhat undefined."[10] Even before news arrived of the November results, Everett had candidly written to Winthrop about his desire to return to the world of politics. Appealing to his past experience in the area of foreign affairs, he indicated an interest in a diplomatic

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[9]Everett to General Harrison, 20 January 40, 8 August 1840, 8 October 1840, 18 December 1840, EEP, vols. 68-70; See also, Everett to S. A. Eliot, 23 January 1840, EEP, vol. 68.

[10]"Diary," 31 December 1840, EEP, vol. 156, Everett to Winthrop, 20 December 1840, EEP, vol. 70.

appointment abroad. He insisted, however, that if Webster wished such a position, he would willingly eliminate himself. On the other hand, if he were to be considered, his wife's health would limit him to either Paris, London, Vienna, or Constantinople. Upon confirmation of Harrison's victory, he sent congratulations with the offer to "render any service abroad,..."[11]

Although Everett's hopes initially depended upon Webster's decision, by March, 1841, he confided his optimism to his father-in-law, P.C. Brooks; "I have very strong reasons to think I shall be nominated to some place abroad."[12] But if Webster's decision to accept the post of secretary of state brought feelings of hope, this mood vacillated.[13] Everett's position was complicated by the unexpected death of President Harrison before the appointment was made. This tragedy, Everett believed, would hurt his chances, for he was not on intimate terms with the new President, John Tyler. On the other hand, webster's position in the Cabinet was a plus, for the Secretary was strongly pledged to his success.[14]

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[11]Everett to Winthrop, 15 November 1840, Everett to General Harrison, 18 December 1840, EEP, vols. 60,70.

[12]Everett to P. C. Brooks, 17 March 1841, EEP, vol. 70.

[13]Everett to P. C. Brooks, 29 May 1841, EEP, vol. 70.

[14]Everett to P. C. Brooks, 29 May 1841, EEP, vol. 70.

There is evidence during these months that Everett's defeat in 1839 had affected him more than he indicated. In fact, his fear of being rejected accounted, perhaps, for his moments of despair, and, at other times, an air of unconcern over his future political life. "I shall neither be surprised nor afflicted, if my turn does not come," he wrote to Joseph Sprague in April, 1841.[15]

If these feelings were intensified by the uncertainty, the eventual news that his nomination to the Court of St. James had been placed before the Senate did not bring the expected relief. "Although this is the place which above all others under the government, I thought I desired and of which I had even expressed a preference I have been strongly depressed in spirits since I heard of the nomination," he entered in his **diary** on August 19, 1841. This depression was caused by his concern over possible Southern opposition to his nomination.[16] Although he hoped to receive news of the Senate action by September 9th or 10th, he had, in fact, underestimated this opposition. Representatives of the South were concerned over Everett's ability to represent them --

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[15]Everett to Sprague, 13 April 1841, EEP, vol. 70; See also Everett to P. C. Brooks, 1 August 1841, EEP, vol. 71.

[16]"Diary," 19 August 1841, EEP, vol. 157.

especially after disclosure of his 1836 letter to William Jackson condemning the institution of slavery. His fears increased with news from Fletcher Webster, the Secretary of State's son, that his nomination possibly would fail.[17]

Upon receipt of this information, Everett sent a note to Daniel Webster explaining the letter and the circumstances surrounding its publication. Though he had no clear recollection of its contents, he did remember that these views fell "far within the limits of those expressed by the Whig candidates generally,...." Its purpose had been "to prevent the Van Buren abolitionists from carrying the whole of the Abolition party with them." In light of these remarks it could be assumed that his opposition to slavery in 1836 was motivated purely by political considerations. On the other hand, this letter to Webster must be understood as coming from one who had gone through a trying period during the previous year and now -- being so close to his goal -- found it threatened by this ghost. It is clear that this tension affected Everett for he exhibited a rare feeling of rage against those who now sought to destroy him. "This blow, if it is to take effect as intended by the Southern Whig Senators (whigs who while I from the year 1825 was humbly exerting myself in the ranks

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[17]Everett to P. C. Brooks, 29 August 1841, EEP, vol. 71, "Diary," 30 August 1841, EEP, vol. 157.

which you led, were many of them as actively and far more efficiently engaged under General Jackson in carrying on the policy under which the country is now suffering /will/ blast my political prospects forever...."[18]

But if Everett had previously underestimated the opposition, he now exaggerated its strength. By September, he still had not received word from Washington, though unofficial reports noting his confirmation appeared in the press. It was only after rumors continued to appear in several London papers and Everett was informed of his confirmation by an English friend that he prepared to leave for England. Upon his arrival in London on November 10, 1841, official confirmation was presented to him in the form of a commission as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.[19]

As for any ill-feeling toward those of the South who had opposed his nomination, Everett jokingly wrote that their punishment be no worse, "than to have to make a hasty journey by land and water from Naples to London, with a large family, at this season of the year."[20]

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[18]Everett to Webster, 28 August 1841, EEP, vol. 71; See also, Everett to P. C. Brooks, 29 August 1841, EEP, vol. 71, "Diary," 30 August 1841, EEP, vol. 157.

[19]Everett to F. S. Sloan Esq., 2 September 1841, Everett to Webster, 22 October 1841, 15 November 1841, EEP, vol. 71.

[20]Everett to Webster (Private), 15 December 1841, EEP.

In 1850 Everett reflected on his success and recalled a passage from Franklin's Autobiography. "My father having among his instructions, to me when a boy," wrote Franklin, "frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, 'seest thou a man diligent in his calling? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men.'"[21] If this rang true for Franklin it most certainly held truth for Everett. That Everett stood before kings was indicative of his changed life. During his earlier visit to Europe, Everett, representing the intellectual community, searched out his European counterparts and became immersed in the scholarly issues of the day. Twenty-five years later, he rarely encountered the continent's literary figures. His journals and letters, however, are replete with meetings and dinners with heads of state, not to mention the entire diplomatic and political circle of London during the period of 1841-1845. In October, 1840, he met Louis-Phillipe at St. Cloud. He had "great sagacity & judgment & is the life & soul of his government...," Everett believed. Later in the year, he encountered the Grand Duke of Tuscany and in August of 1841 he was received by Joseph Napoleon. Both impressed him.[22] Though

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[21]Everett, "Autobiography," 6:3.

[22]Ibid., See also, Everett to Mrs. Hale 16 March 1842, EEP, vol. 73. Everett to General Harrison, 8 October 1840, 12 December 1840, Everett to P. C. Brooks, 13 December 1840, 1 August 1841, EEP, vols.69, 70, 71.

Everett had once remarked to Benjamin Hallett that he had no desire to go to the court, for he had a "frugal competence" which he did not "wish to throw into the gulf of dinner-giving & other wearisome official dissipation," by 1842 a typical week's activities consisted of such social functions, and little if any concern was mentioned.[23]

Everett's disposition and temper made him quite at ease in the orderly, rational, highly aristocratic, cultured life of the English upper-class. His principles and assumptions were in harmony with the English environment and were evident in his approach to international politics. At the end of his tenure as minister, Everett expressed the viewpoint of the international elite.

> Not only is the immediate object to be gained, that is to keep the government in good hands, well worth the effort; -- but it is better to fight the great battle for order from the outer wall than let the enemy penetrate to the citadel. By keeping good principles constantly before the public, though you may not elect the best men to office, you may maintain the community at large a respect for property and law. It is better to contend for an election and be defeated; than to take the daily risk of a fight for your purse and life.[24]

Everett's hope while in America had been to unify national opposites, to pacify emotionally hostile factions under the umbrella of New England tradition, culture,

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[23]Everett to Hallett, 17 February 1836, Everett to Mrs. Hale, 16 March 1842, Everett to N. M. Rothschild and Son, 24 March 1842, Everett to Webster, 30 March 1842, EEP, vols. 66A, 73, "Diary," 2 May 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[24]Everett to Winthrop, 2 October 1844, RCWP.

and values. Moderation, frugality in life, and above all rationality of approach were the guidelines to success. And if emotionalism had sought to play havoc with the rational operation of parties within the nation, Everett soon discovered that the emotionally charged issue of slavery pervaded international politics and often clouded the rational operation of clear-thinking men. He now saw himself as a counterweight to those whose emotional sloganeering might hinder the rational operation of diplomacy. In September 1843, Everett wrote Winthrop respecting the crisis over Oregon, "Oregon is indeed a grave, -- not to say a menacing topic; -- if no vital importance in reference to the material interests at stake, our factions, as in the case of the boundary, -- our wicked unprincipled factions, -- make it menacing."[25]

In the early period of his career, however, it was not the jingoist call of 54° 40' which confronted him; it was slavery. Bemoaning the role the slave issue had in international affairs, Everett wrote, "God grant that this millstone may be taken from the neck of the country, in some peaceful and constitutional way."[26] This plea for transcendental aid came amidst Everett's negotiating the delicate problems arising out of the international slave trade. The English, in an attempt

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[25]Everett to Winthrop, 18 September 1843, RCWP.

[26]Everett to Winthrop (Private) 2 April 1842, RCWP.

to put a halt to the slave traffic, tried to establish the right to search American merchant ships in times of peace. This in itself had excited Americans who saw a return to pre-1812 days; but it especially angered southerners, who were extremely sensitive on this particular issue. In November, 1841 officers of the Creole, an American slaver en route to New Orleans, were overpowered by the slaves onboard -- an uprising resulting in the death of one white passenger. In their search for freedom, the blacks sought refuge in the British Bahamas. There they were admitted by British officials who refused to return them despite the demands of their owners. The actual murderers, however, were held for their crime.[27]

Everett's response to this controversy was remarkably consistent with his past actions. Overlooking the moral question, he focused immediately on the legal ramifications respecting international property rights. This issue, he thought, required a legal judgment on the definition of property. In our country, he wrote, if a federal claim were handed down against a southerner whose only property was slaves, they would have to be sold and the proceeds entered into the Treasury. "This certainly would be an assertion of extremist right of property but under our laws I do not know that it could be helped."[28]

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[27]Thomas Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, 7 ed (New York, 1964), pp. 210-211.

[28]Everett to Winthrop (Private) 2 April 1842, RCWP.

Though Everett often attacked extremism, in this case he found it acceptable. Confronting Lord Aberdeen in June, 1842, Everett put to him the question of an American ship mistakingly being brought into a British port, and after finding a mistake had been made, discovered slaves aboard. After Aberdeen reflected for a moment, he responded: "We should liberate the slaves and compensate the owner." This response, Everett told Webster, seemed incredible. Interference with property justified from this moralistic point of view would destroy the concept of property under law and tended to disrupt the orderly, rational workings of law and politics.[29]

Throughout 1842 Everett expressed his deep concern over the tensions between the two countries. Nevertheless, he continued to press American claims for adjustments as well as making clear his government's anger about attacks on American shipping in the African waters.[30] But he also hoped that the two countries could resolve this problem in joint action with other great powers. He proposed that the United States join the five-power

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[29]Everett to Webster (Private) 2 June 1842, EEP, vol. 44.

[30]Everett to Webster, 12 December 1841, Everett to Webster (Confidential) 3 January 1842, Everett to P. C. Brooks, 31 January 1842, Everett to President Tyler, 19 March 1842, EEP, vols. 44, 72, 73, "Diary," 20 September 1842, EEP, vol. 161; George Gill, "Minister to the Court of St. James, 1841-1845" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Fordham University, 1959), p. 46 (hereafter cited as Gill, "Minister").

Treaty and participate in policing the international waters off the African coast. News of these treaty negotiations was common and had been the topic of discussion between Lord Palmerston and Everett's predecessor. In December, 1842, the treaty appeared complete, and Everett expressed his expectation that America would be asked to join. In January, 1842, Everett had, in fact, sent a confidential letter to Webster supporting participation with the five powers. He argued that in no way would this be detrimental to American national honor, nor would American interests suffer. If this peaceful offer failed to gain American support, Everett warned, then what alternatives remained other than war?[31]

While Everett was writing to Webster, however, General Lewis Cass, minister to France, voiced his objections. This treaty, he thought, was an attempt on the part of the British to legislate their interpretations of the maritime code.[32] Everett hoped to counter Cass's views with letters to both Cass and President Tyler. He expressed his belief that Britain was sincere in her desires. In addition he wished to eliminate any thought that England wanted war over this issue.[33]

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[31]Everett to Webster, 28 December 1841, January 1842 (confidential), 21 January 1842 (Private),EEP,vols. 44,72.

[32]Gill, "minister," p. 36.

[33]Everett to General Cass, 21 February 1842, Everett to President Tyler, 19 March 1842, EEP, vol. 72.

But Everett's letters arrived after President Tyler had already acted in accordance with Cass's observation. Tyler, however, left the issue open, feeling that it would be dealt with during negotiations between Secretary of State Webster and Lord Ashburton.[34] It was Everett's deep concern over the Webster-Ashburton negotiations which, in part, prompted his proposal. He wished to see both parties begin with a sense of cooperation. "Lord Ashburton has not yet embarked for America," he wrote Brooks, "but will do so in a few days. I felt somewhat sanguine of his success till the affair of the Creole took place."[35]

It was perhaps with the desire for harmony in mind that Everett's two orations during 1842 centered on the mutuality of interests and culture of the two nations. Before the British Association at Manchester in May, 1842, Everett spoke of a new nation emerging in America which was in close connection with Great Britain.[36] Economically the tie was obvious. Politically, he said, "we are children of the British school of freedom."[37] And if common

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[34]Gill, "Minister," p. 40.

[35]Everett to P. C. Brooks, 31 January 1842, EEP, vol. 72.

[36]Edward Everett, "British Association at Manchester," 25 May 1842, Orations, 2:426-427.

[37]Ibid., pp. 429-430.

institutions were not enough to bind us together, could we escape the community of language? "It is a bond from which it is not possible for either party to break away," he said two months later.[38]

Some harmony between the two countries was achieved by the end of 1842. Webster and Ashburton had successfully concluded an agreement on the slave trade and resolved the Northeastern boundary dispute. But this political atmosphere was emphemeral. The slavery issue had intensified the question of Texan independence. In addition, the unresolved problem of the Oregon Territory was aggravated by the spirit of Manifest Destiny and popular rhetoric.[39]

Within the framework of this growing popular voice Everett circulated information and opinions which would counter the hysteria engendered by "wicked unprincipled factions" in America.[40] In moments of despair, he often soothed himself with the thought that his communications were of "greater importance than they have ever been." And when his own opinions and those of the newly appointed Secretary of State Abel Upshur conflicted, he confided to

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[38]Edward Everett, "Meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society at Bristol," 14 July 1842, Orations, 2: 435-441.

[39]Everett to Calhoun, 2 November 1844, EEP, vol. 50.

[40]Everett to Winthrop (Confidential) 18 September 1843, RCWP.

Winthrop that given the state of affairs in the country, he "thought the best course to pursue was to act, as long as I could do so, without compromising my principles; -- assuming, as I suppose I can do confidentially to you, that it is better for the public, that I should be here, than anyone who would be sent in my place by this Administration."[41]

It was not that Everett objected to the visions which Manifest Destiny projected. In fact, Upshur, Calhoun and Everett all agreed on the future place Texas would have on the continent. While Everett had some reservations over the admittance of Texas into the Union, an event which he believed would have disrupting tendencies, he nevertheless was willing to go along with the policy carried out by Upshur and Calhoun. The difference was more of style, means, and implementation.[42] While Calhoun raised the "British Bogey" in order to create popular support, Everett refused to become part of what he termed a "disturbing policy." Thus along with modifying the anti-British rhetoric of American nationalism, Everett sought to counter claims that Britain had sinister ambitions in Texas. This became the essence of his policy respecting Oregon as well.

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[41]Everett to Winthrop (Confidential) 18 June 1844, ROWP.

[42]Gill, "Minister," pp. 97-98.

In the early days of February, 1843, with the successful conclusion of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, Everett was optimistic. In addition, the British government, which had at first been cool to the idea of receiving a similar mission to deal with the Oregon boundary, had changed its attitude by February. Everett, after meeting with Lord Aberdeen believed that settlement could be reached.[43] By mid-year, however, this optimistic spirit had been dampened. News of the President's remarks calling for an immediate settlement of the territorial question coupled with the Senate's resolution of occupation darkened the negotiations. Furthermore, the amicable mood of the Webster-Ashburton negotiations was soon overshadowed by the crisis of Texas.[44] Upshur's response to the challenge of Texas only added to this tension. On September 28, 1843, he informed Everett that the slave-holder "ought not submit, and would not submit" to a free state on her borders.[45] On the other hand, remarks by Lord Brougham and Lord Aberdeen made

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[43]Everett to ?, 2 February 1843, Everett to Webster 10 February 1843, 27 February 1843 (Private), EEP, vol. 45.

[44]Everett to His Excellency C. S. Todd, 18 March 1843, Everett to President of the United States (Private and Confidential) 3 June 1845, EEP, vols. 74,45, "Diary," 3 June 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[45]A. P. Upshur to Everett, 28 September 1843 (Confidential) in Senate Document 341, 28th Congress, 1st Session.

in the House of Lords on the 18th of August, calling for the abolition of slavery in Texas, seemed to throw doubt on Everett's contention that British motives were pure. "Her objects undoubtedly are to revive the industry of their East and West India colonies," wrote Upshur, "to find new markets for her surplus manufactures, and to destroy as far as possible the rivalry and competition of the United States. That the abolition of African slavery throughout the Western World lead to these results is altogether probable."[46] Thus by September, 1843, Everett told Winthrop that he considered the situation "grave."[47]

Everett set to work to counter what he believed to be a misstatement of British designs in America. He was so concerned that no misunderstanding of British policy be forwarded that he had Lord Aberdeen correct the draft of his dispatch.[48] Two letters were sent to Upshur in November, 1843: one under the heading of an official dispatch the other sent privately. In them are contained Everett's major points. He informed Upshur that while England had acknowledged Texan independence, and had long been pledged to encourage the abolition of

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Everett to Winthrop, 18 September 1843, RCWP.

[48] Gill, "minister," p. 70.

slave trade and slavery, she had no wish to "interfere in the internal concerns of foreign governments." While there were some in England who were "willing to go all lengths" to see these ends achieved, they were not of the party now in power. Finally, Everett noted, his agreement with Guizot's opinion that measures and language of the English government reflected the strong antislavery sentiment of the community; but that it "does not constitute in itself one of the elemental characters of their policy."

> In short, if you will carefully trace the measures of the present Ministry on this subject, I think you will find them, what they claim to be on all subjects 'Conservative'; by which I certainly do not mean that they desire to preserve Slavery; -- but that they are disposed on this, as on all other questions to resist sudden change and are disinclined to endanger the public peace, for the promotion of ends recommended by their opponents on liberal principles. -- And I suspect that this may be a more general feeling in England, than we are apt to suppose.[49]

Everett's intentions were clear: to dispel any thoughts in America that British designs in Texas were anything other than merely philanthropic concerning slavery and, more importantly, to divorce public governmental statements from the reality of governmental policy. Perhaps Everett was also warning Upshur that this separation of public rhetoric and administration policy should be made equally clear to the British minister at Washington.

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[49]Everett to Upshur, 3 November 1843, 3 November 1843, EEP, vol. 47.

Everett's dispatches and private correspondence to the British government were in the same vein as the November 3rd letters to Upshur. He hoped to convey America's mood over Texas and his country's resolve not to concede territory below the 49th degree latitude in Oregon.[50] There is some indication that Aberdeen appreciated the seriousness of American feelings. In the hope of cooling the rhetoric, Everett informed Upshur that Aberdeen "would endeavor hereafter to express himself with great caution, when it became necessary to speak of slavery."[51]

News that a bill of annexation was presented to the Congress did not receive the hostile reaction in the London press one might have expected, Everett suggested. As for his own views concerning annexation, he wrote Winthrop, "I was not upon the whole taken by surprise by the passage of the annexation resolution through the Senate. When a division is at best close there are always found means of passing it in favor of the South." And though France and England joined together in 1845 to remonstrate against American actions in Texas, Everett's own feeling was that they would not make this

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[50]Everett to Upshur, 16 November 1843, Everett to Calhoun (Private) 17 April, 1844, 28 February 1845, EEP, vol. 47; Everett to Winthrop, 24 March 1844, 29 March 1844, RCWP; Gill, "Minister," p. 115.

[51]Everett to Upshur (Private and Confidential) 16 November 1843, EEP, vol. 47.

issue a question of peace or war. Nevertheless, Everett did believe that Aberdeen's concern over the exclusive occupation of Oregon was sincere and could lead to conflict.[52]

These issues, however, remained unresolved throughout the period of his tenure. The election of James Polk in 1844 and the transfer of power to the Democrats only complicated the present condition. Upon receipt of the inaugural address, Everett reflected upon the state of the nation with a sense of awe. "Events are hurrying forward with great rapidity. The acquisition of Texas turns over a new leaf in the history of America, perhaps of the world. But how vain to speculate on the future! What was America a hundred years ago?"[53]

If the country's future was unpredictable, Everett's own future was anything but clear. In January he wrote Winthrop asking for advice: should he ask for his recall or stay as long as possible? Although Winthrop advised recall, it appears that Webster suggested the opposite.[54] But by mid-March, news had reached Everett that nine ministers appointed by the President had been confirmed by a strict party vote. "I consider it nearly certain

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[52]Everett to Calhoun, 18 May 1844, Everett to Winthrop, 29 March 1845, EEP, vol. 49, "Diary," 6 February 1845, 15 February 1845, 21 February 1845, EEP, vol. 146.

[53]"Diary," 28 March 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[54]Everett to Winthrop, 3 January 1845, 29 March 1845, RCWP.

that I shall be recalled," he entered in his diary, "and such is the thankless nature of our public service poorly paid: - poorly backed by the home-government; - and poorly appreciated by the people that the sooner my term of office is over the better I believe for me & mine."[55]

By June 14, Everett still had not received news from Washington concerning his position. This he felt was shabby treatment. Rumors that the presidency of Harvard College would be offered to him made the uncertainty worse.[56] Under normal circumstances, this position would have been ideal, but Everett feared constant recurrences of insubordination among the students. Disorders, which had occurred several times during Josiah Quincy's administration, would make him wretched. "However well disposed the mass might be," he observed, "there will always be a few evil disposed individuals who are able to keep the whole society in a state of discord."[57]

Finally on June 28, 1845 Everett received news from the President of the United States informing him that Louis McLane had been appointed Minister and would arrive some time in the beginning of August. Both the

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[55]"Diary," 18 March 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[56]"Diary," 14 June 1845, 14 May 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[57]"Diary," 14 May 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

President and McLane assured Everett that the decision to replace him should not be attributed to a dissatisfaction of his conduct, but rather to recent political events. Nevertheless, the official news ended what dim hope Everett had held.[58] If there was to be compensation for these years of public service, perhaps it came in the form of a semi-official letter from Chief Justice Shaw offering him the presidency of Harvard. Yet by August 30th, as he set sail for his home in Boston, Everett still felt "great anxiety on that subject" and about his future.[59]

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[58]"Diary," 28 June 1845, 15 July 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[59]"Diary," 30 August 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

CHAPTER IX

YEARS OF ADVERSITY

Everett returned to America in September, 1845. Upon landing, he found a letter from the Corporation of Harvard asking him to accept the presidency.[1] He did not decide, however, until the end of November. The decision was not easy, under any circumstances, and illness further complicated the issue. Advice from friends tended to confuse rather than to aid him.[2] Uppermost in his mind was the question of his role and responsibilities in the new position. Would he have time to pursue his real interests in literature, or would his time be consumed by the petty cares, business details,

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[1]"Diary," 20 September 1845, EEP, vol. 164, Everett to S. A. Eliot, (Private), 22 September 1845, EEP, vol. 76.

[2]President J. Q. Adams, Webster and President Josiah Quincy all urged that he accept the position. Mr. Hale strongly urged against it. "Diary," 24 September 1845, 29 September 1845, 13 November 1845, 24 October 1845, EEP, vols. 164, 165.

and vexations of maintaining discipline? Furthermore, was he prepared to deal with the hostility directed at the college from certain elements in the world of theology?[3]

Nevertheless, many considerations seemed to push him toward the position. Perhaps it was Everett's true calling, as Webster suggested, or the desire to remain in public life which persuaded him finally to accept the offer. He admitted that few men have great power in the world to do good, and their destiny was of great consequence. Surely he was not one of these. Everett felt, however, that "the desire that I would go to Cambridge is so strongly pressed and so generally that I do not feel as if I had a right to hesitate."[4] Various members of the college community, in addition, made it clear that Everett's apprehensions were unfounded and that the position would provide leisure time for study and literary pursuits. Dr. Warren assured him, as well, that both Episcopal and Orthodox members in the community supported his nomination. The Providence Journal said of Everett's appointment that "Harvard University never saw a brighter day," while The Harbinger wrote "this was a proud day for our old University."[5]

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[3]Everett to Dr. Park, 6 October 1845, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 9 October 1845, Everett to Dr. Wainwright, 22 October 1845, Everett to Sidney Brooks Esq., 11 November 1845, EEP, vol. 76, 77.

[4]"Diary," 25 November 1845, EEP, vol. 165.

[5]Everett to Chief Justice Shaw, 26 November 1845, Everett to Charles G. Loring, 26 November 1845, Everett to Rev. Dr. Walker, 26 November 1845, EEP, vol. 77, "Diary," 24 September 1845, EEP, vol. 164, Providence Journal, May 5, 1846, The Harbinger, May 9, 1846. See also, Christian Register, May 23, 1846.

Harvard was more than a place to spend a few years. Everett believed that the institution stood for those values which dominated his life. In many ways Harvard was symbolic of America. "I regard the University as a very important instrument for the preservation and diffusion of sound principles in our country," he wrote Joshua Bates after his acceptance. It was perhaps the decline of Harvard within the community and his hope to give it the stature deserved that finally convinced him to accept on November 25, 1845.[6] The advancement of "conservative principles," which "in a larger sense" included "a liberal meaning spirit of reform and progress," was his goal. To Sir Robert Peel he wrote, "I shall in this new position be wholly withdrawn from political life; but I hope through the agency of the University to be able to act as efficiently toward the support and diffusion of sound principles, as I could do in any other way."[7]

Finally, there were few, if any other career possibilities. "I have come to this decision," he wrote W. C. Rives, "from disgust at public life and a conviction that this position opens a field of usefulness and

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[6]"Diary," 13 November 1845, EEP, vol. 165, Everett to Joshua Bates, 29 November 1845, Everett to H. D. Gilpin, 2 December 1845, Everett to Dr. Holland, 24 December 1845, EEP, vol. 77.

[7]Everett to Dr. Henry Holland, 24 November 1845, Everett to Peel, 28 November 1845, EEP, vol. 77.

consequently happiness, -- not uncongenial to my tastes, -- and more promise than any other accessible to me in the present condition of the country."[8]

As in the past, Everett continued to believe that education was the key to preserving and propagating the New England way. "I know of no protection against this impending evil [social unrest] but the diffusion of knowledge, the extension as widely as possible of all the advantages of education, and generally the intellectual improvement of the community," he wrote to Sidney Brooks in 1852. And to Joshua Bates in the same year, "The tendency of popular governments is to radicalism and anarchy the only safe guard against these evils is the intelligence of the people."[9]

Harvard, however, would not provide the order or promise hoped for. The college, like the country, was feeling the impact of democracy. Jingoism and Manifest Destiny were disrupting international relations. Locally, the democratic spirit was changing religious and social institutions; abolitionism was on the increase.[10]

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[8]Everett to Hon. W. C. Rives, 8 January 1846, EEP, vol. 77, Everett to Hon. C. Foote, 24 June 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

[9]Everett to Sidney Brooks, (Private) 28 June 1852, Everett to Bates, 25 October 1852, EEP, vols. 101, 102; See also, Edward Everett, "Aid to Education," 1849, Orations, 2:625, 623-624.

[10]Lee Benson, The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy; John W. Ward, Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age (New York, 1955); Bernard Weisberger, They Gathered By the River

On April 30, 1846, Governor George N. Briggs formally introduced and welcomed the new president of Harvard to the people of the Commonwealth. Less than two weeks later, others welcomed the new president by exploding firecrackers in the entry to his study.[11] This event, in many ways, presaged the remaining two and one half years at Harvard. If trustees and students had sought to quiet Everett's fears of impending turmoil, Everett was "soon disenchanted."[12] Indeed, this disenchantment was so deep that he told Eliot, he would never have taken the position had he known the university to be in such a state of disorganization. At first, Everett assumed his burden was due, in part, to his own lack of experience, as between an "old sailor & a green hand." At the end of the spring semester, he abandoned hope that the condition would change.[13]

During June and July Everett filled his 'diary' with notations of grief and despondency over the state of

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(Boston, 1958); T. L. Smith, Revivalism & Social Reform: American Protestanism on the Eve of the Civil War (New York, 1957): Hartz, Liberal Tradition.

[11]"Diary," 30 April 1846, EEP, vol. 165; Silbey's Private Journal, 1846-1865 Harvard University Archives, 1:31.

[12]Everett to Winthrop, 14 April 1846, RGWP; Everett to Messrs. Frances Howland, J. P. Eldridge, and Classmates, 14 May 1846, College Letters, Harvard University Archives, vol. 1.

[13]"Diary," 6 April 1846, EEP, vol. 165, Everett to Winthrop, 14 April 1846, EEP, vol. 78.

the college. "I find nearly all the statements given me of its good condition grossly exaggerated and some absolutely false." This feeling of being misled began to dominate his thoughts throughout the remaining year. "Every day brings me some new proof that the representations made to me of the state of the College were grossly delusive, not to say deceptive & that in coming here I have taken a step which will cost me my happiness and perhaps my life."[14]

The deception, he felt, was even deeper than originally conceived. He was led to believe that time would be available to pursue other interests. By July, 1846, he realized that this too was an illusion. "Instead of two or three hours daily," he wrote Webster,

> in which I was told the routine of the work could be gone through I find the whole day, from five in the morning till 10 at night too short for it & my vacation instead of being a season of repose which I greatly need, is filled up in advance with reserved labors. Instead of time for literary pursuits, I have not had two hours reading since I came here & the quality of my work is worse than its amount, being that of an usher & police magistrate combined.[15]

Some of Everett's trouble at Harvard, however, was his own making. In an attempt to revive the religious

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[14]"Diary," 7 June 1846, 2 June 1846, EEP, vol. 165; See also, 12 June 1846, 16 June 1846, 7 July 1846 19 July 1846, EEP, vol. 165.

[15]Everett to Webster, 6 July 1846, EEP, vol. 79; See also Everett to Winthrop, 1 August 1846, RCWP.

tenor of campus life, Everett hoped to persuade the faculty to attend morning services. "This is the first step of a vital reform in the institution if it succeeds; if it fails, I leave, --" he wrote in his diary on May 14, 1846. The faculty did not respond favorably, and the affair caused unnecessary hardship for Everett. Finally, in January, 1848, the Corporation ruled against any formal plan to require faculty to attend Prayers.[16] Everett did not leave.

There was also the issue of the seal of Harvard. Should the old seal, used by the college up to 1843, with the inscription "Christo et Ecclesiae" be restored, or should the college maintain the newly created seal with the motto "Veritas"? This question consumed a great deal of his time and energy. Further, Everett intensified the issue by again making it personal. After bringing forth his resolution which supported a return to the old seal, he wrote in his diary, "Should the Corp. decline adopting this resolution I shall consider it as indicating a want of confidence in me of a very devious character."[17]

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[16]"Diary," 14 May 1846, 29 January 1848, EEP, vols. 165, 167, Everett to Sparks, 26 March 1849, EEP, vol. 88; See also, Everett to Hon Judge White, 13 September 1848, EEP, vol. 86.

[17]Everett to J. A. Eliot, 24 November 1846, 6 October 1846, College Letters, vol. 1; "Diary," 27 February 1847, EEP, vol. 166.

But these issues should not be overemphasized. Everett's major problem was not corporate affairs, but student discipline. The record of the college papers and Everett's own personal letters show that the greatest part of his time concerned student disorder, student inadequacy, and individual disciplinary problems. Letters were sent to parents informing them of their sons' dismissal, or their sons' inability to do work; and letters were sent to members of the board of trustees and the Corporation explaining the disciplinary problems confronting the college. But while these were serious enough, the years 1846 and 1847 were particularly noted for the high incidence of acts beyond the realm of mere disciplinary affairs.[18] On March 26, 1847, a bonfire was set on the steps of University Hall which ignited the building. Then little less than a month later, a fire was set to a bundle of straw and placed within the doorway of Everett's house; an event which immediately prompted

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[18]Everett to Hon. J. D. Green (Private), 15 July 1846, Everett to N. J. Bowditch (Private) 17 July 1846, Everett to Henry Middleton, 20 July 1846, Everett to Mrs. Keyes, 20 July 1846, Everett to Stephen Ives, 20 July 1846, Everett to Mr. Justice McLean, 7 August 1846, Everett to Dr. Samuel Johnson, 29 April 1847, Everett to Quincy, 12 June 1847, Everett to Hon. G. B. Upton, 9 April, 1847, Everett to Hon. Rufus Choate, 16 June 1847, College Letters, vol. 1, Everett to Chief Justice Shaw, 6 January 1847, Everett to B. J. Howland, 9 April 1847, Everett to S. K. Lothrop, 24 July 1847, EEP, vols. 80, 81, 82.

his resignation, though later withdrawn.[19]

Everett's inability to bring order and moderation to Harvard was depressing. "My time taken up today with the most disgusting details of discipline; such as make the heart perfectly sick: -- fraud, deception, falsehood, unhandsome conduct: -- Parents & Friends harrassing me all the time & foolishly believed (sic) the lies their children tell them," he wrote in April, 1847. At the end of 1846, he remarked, "I have grown ten years older the last twelve months."[20]

By March, 1848, news spread throughout the campus that the president was going to tender his resignation effective at the close of the term. No official word, however, came from Everett until July, when he informed Dr. Walker that because of poor health he could no longer

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[19]"Memo on Fire at Harvard, 26 March 1847," in EEP, vol. 81, 18 May 1847; "Memorandum," College Letters, 1:225, Everett to J. A. Eliot, 13 April 1847, College Letters, vol. 1. Some other incidents occurred: minor disorders during the night, bringing dogs into chapel, nailing closed gate between the president's house and the central court, excessive absences, general bad habits, being in the company of "dissolute women." Silbey's Private Journal, 11 November 1846, vol. 1, "Diary," 4 January 1847, 12 March 1847, EEP, vol. 166.

[20]"Diary," 5 April 1847, 31 December 1846, 8 March 1847, 24 March 1847, 12 June 1847, 9 June 1846, 7 July 1846, 19 July 1846, 2 August 1847, 26 January 1848, EEP, vols. 165, 166, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 26 January 1848, EEP, vol. 83. In this letter Everett wrote, "I never had so little time for literary pursuits. But I am like a wolf whose leg is caught in a steel-trap: The position is uncomfortable, but the mode of extrication not less so: the animal seldom makes up his mind to wait quietly till he is knocked in the head."

continue his functions at Harvard, but would stay until the end of the following semester.[21] It is possible that Everett's concern for his health was heightened by news of his brother Alexander's sudden death in China. Though Everett's relationship during the past five or six years had been cooled by Alexander's joining the Democratic party, his death came as a complete shock. "I have for some time had reason to think that I am travelling by the same path toward the same goal; the rate of speed not a little hastened by the poisonous cares of my office," he wrote upon receiving the news.[22] Four months later, word arrived concerning the death of Daniel Webster's son Edward in Mexico and the great national tragedy of J. Q. Adams' death. By the end of 1848, Everett closed his diary with the somber thought:

> And thus the years is closed. One of my eventful years for it witnessed the resignation of the office in which I thought to close my days. My health has very materially fallen off with little prospect of restoration -- Some of the great warnings have been distinctly given me.[23]

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[21] Silbey's Private Journal, 20 March 1848, vol. 1; Everett to Rev Dr. Walker, 1 July 1848, EEP, vol. 85, "Diary," 1 July 1848, EEP, vol. 167.

[22] "Diary," 19 October 1847, EEP, vol. 166; See also, Everett to Dr. Warren, 20 October 1847. Silbey recorded in his journal: "The President's health suffers; sleep is almost a stranger to him. To me it would not be surprising if he should become seriously sick & disqualified for the duties of his office." Silbey's Private Journal, 2 April 1847, vol. 1.

[23] "Diary," 31 December 1848, EEP, vol. 168.

On New Year's Day additional "warning" came with the death of his father-in-law, P. C. Brooks.[24]

Yet all of Everett's days at Harvard were not moments of adversity, pain, and defeat. When he arrived, he had found the college in a state of chaos, beset by student disorder. By 1848, he felt the college had improved remarkably, though he had not received proper recognition. In his own estimation, he played the role of a "thankless reformer."[25] There were some who did recognize Everett's achievements, however. Silbey, who disliked Everett personally, nevertheless praised his administration.

> Let his successor be who he may, the College will be likely to suffer severely from his resignation. He had hard trials at first, but having gained the victory has brought the College into an excellent condition & strangers can have no adequate idea of the general improvement of the Institution during an administration which has not yet extended quite to the term of three years. There is great courtesy, gentlemanly bearing, & correctness of conduct and diligence. Amusements, or jokes & tricks, when they are indulged in are not of the low character which formerly prevailed. If he had continued several years longer he would have given an impulse & high tone to the College, which would never have been entirely lost. A vast change has taken place in the feelings of the students towards him.[26]

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[24]"Diary," 1 January 1849, EEP, vol. 169.

[25]"Diary," 12 August 1846, EEP, vol. 165, Everett to Holland, 30 July 1847, Everett to Mr. Denison, 9 August 1847, EEP, vol. 82.

[26]Silbey's Private Journal, 27 November 1848, vol. 1; Others like Professor Parsons, the Librarian, Mr. Chamberlain, Judge White, Chairmen of the Committee of Intellectual Philosophy, an ex-tutor named Mr. Langer, praised his tenure. "Diary," 5 December 1848, 23

Everett believed that the lack of credit was related to a general respect for President Quincy who had held the post for sixteen years. In fact, Everett confided to Winthrop that he had restrained his statements relative to the condition of the college out of respect for the feelings of Mr. Quincy. Part of his trouble, Everett found, came from his inability to depart from the traditions which had developed over the past sixteen years. "I soon found that, for the sake of peace & harmony, I was in danger of sacrificing sense of duty and conscience."[27]

Harvard had provided anything but the orderly environment Everett desired. But his inability to find his sanctuary at Cambridge was indicative of a graver problem. Everett began to sense during these trying years at Harvard, that disorder and the breakdown of values went beyond the walls of the college. His own decision to come to Harvard reflected his inability and lack of desire to adjust to the modern trend in American politics. "I have not the slightest wish to return to public life, and had made up my mind at all events to leave it. Nothing would have induced me to encounter the

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December 1848, 12 July 1847, EEP, vols. 166, 167, Everett to Charles P. Loring, 13 December 1847.

[27]Everett to Winthrop, 20 December 1848, RCWP. For additional expression of Everett's feeling that he was a "thankless reformer," see, "Diary," 23 December 1848, 29 May 1847, 9 June 1847, 17 July 1847, 30 December 1847, EEP, vols. 166, 167.

coarse violence into which our party contests have degenerated," he wrote Webster in July, 1846.[28]

During these years, Everett came to believe that this political change was the child of a deeper social malady. To Governor Davis, he wrote, discipline and order were difficult problems at the college, but the issue went beyond Harvard. "I am not without misgivings," he said, "that the state of society is unfriendly to an effective discipline in places of education." In June, 1848, he recalled the days of "schoolboy chivalry." "These manners belong to a forgotten order of things. They are too precise and rigorous for this enlightened age. I sometimes fear the pendulum has swung too far in the opposite extreme."[29]

Change was also painfully perceived by Everett in the very heart of society, its religious institutions. "Attended sermon of Dr. Noyes & noted the lack of attendence on the part of students and faculty," he wrote in his diary on March 30, 1846. "The great difficulties of our service are that it is not solemn & is not interesting. The Hymns take up too much time in the reading & singing especially as so many of them are

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[28]Everett to Webster, 6 July 1846, Everett to Gov. Davis, 7 September 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

[29]Edward Everett, "Remarks made at the Dedication of the High School in Cambridge," 27 June 1848, Orations, 2:603.

utterly dull, lifeless & prosaic. The preacher fills too permanent a place in the services; unless he happens to be highly gifted," he wrote in January, 1847. "It is to me quite evident that the miraculous construction of Christianity is the true one. Resolved into mere morality it is cold & powerless. It puts one to sleep to enter a modern church: -- carpet-darkened - & often filled with a most saporific voice."[30]

Even where the church was thriving, he was critical. He was quick to condemn the new breed of preachers who used the pulpit to give vent to violent tirades against slavery and war, not because of his opposition to their position, but because he thought the church was no place for such questions. He was deeply bothered by the sermon of Dr. Samuel Johnson, who had graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 1846. His discourse was filled with all the "ultraism of the day, transcendentalism, radicalism, & abolitionism; -- the latter in all its offensive political forms." "The sermons would have done better at Brook farm than at a Christian church. The fact is, - and there is no use in attempting to disguise it, - a new form of disbelief of all positive religion is springing up & one of the Prof's of our Divinity School

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[30]"Diary," 30 March 1846, 31 January 1847, 30 November 1845, EEP, vol. 165, 166.

is deeply tinctured with it."[31]

These observations of social change, however, were submerged beneath his own particular problems at Harvard and by the dynamic political events revolving around Texas and Oregon. Although he expressed his desire to withdraw from the political arena, the issues of Oregon and Texas were significantly connected with his past and, thus, could not be easily forgotten. Everett's interest during his years in England had focused on Oregon. While Texas had been critical, the immediate danger of confrontation with England, Everett thought, was not Texas but the Northwest. Upon his return to America, he continued to advise compromise. He suggested to Webster that he not bind himself to any single program, for his positions were deemed of great significance in England. Rather, he suggested Webster align himself with the general position of negotiation and compromise.[32] After clearing his intention with Webster, Winthrop, and Bancroft, Everett continued to communicate with his English friends on Anglo-American affairs.[33]

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[31]"Diary," 8 April 1847, 1 August 1847, EEP, vol. 166 See also, "Diary," 8 August 1847, 7 November 1847, EEP, vol. 166.

[32]Everett to Webster, 5 November 1845, EEP, vol. 77; See also, Everett to Hon R. Barnwell Rhett, 28 November 1845, EEP, vol. 77.

[33]Everett to Winthrop, 11 June 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

His fears of conflict were heightened with receipt of President Polk's message concerning Oregon in December, 1845, and the response given to it by Aberdeen and Peel. In letters to members of both countries, Everett tried to soothe the estrangement he saw developing.[34] Blame for the crisis, he believed, rested with both parties; "the English in rejecting the offer of the 49th degree, which I regard as perfectly equitable & reasonable, & we in rendering their acceptance difficult, if not impossible, by various legislative & executive demonstrations -- well calculated if not intended to defeat all amicable compromise."[35] In this light, he was dismayed by the actions of John Quincy Adams. "How Mr. Adams can think that the cause he indicates, (viz immediate denunciation of the treaty to be followed up with a real occupation of the territory) can have any other effect than war I cannot imagine,"[36] he wrote Winthrop.

It was only after both Calhoun and Benton agreed to compromise that Everett felt optimistic. "The great

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[34]Everett to Lord Aberdeen, 10 December 1845, Everett to R. Walsh, 13 December 1845, Everett to Lord Jeffery, 15 January 1845, Everett to Hon. John Davis, 1 January 1846, EEP, vol. 77.

[35]Everett to Col. Aspinwall, 11 December 1845, EEP, vol. 77.

[36]Everett to Winthrop, 8 January 1846, RCWP.

question between our two countries wears at present an encouraging aspect for peace," he wrote Lady Ashburton on March 22, 1846. And to Calhoun he wrote congratulations for "the inestimable service to the country," he had rendered.[37] Everett was clearly overjoyed by the final settlement. The peaceful conclusion he thought was a victory for rationality, moderation, magnanimity, honesty, and patriotism; at the expense of party and the "clamors of demogogues." To Dr. Henry Holland he wrote, "In fact I should not know how to feel or how to act in a war with England, so much have I become attached to it and to the friends which I have there."[38]

Everett's optimism soon was overshadowed by trouble in Texas. As news arrived of the confrontation between General Taylor and Mexican forces, he voiced his concern for his country's stability. "I am greatly concerned at the news from our Mexican Frontier," he wrote Peel. "Although an attempt is making at Washington to stave off a war with Mexico, it seems next to impossible to avoid it. The disaster on our side, with which it is too likely to commence is the more to be deplored, as it

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[37]Everett to Bates, 31 January 1846, Everett to Lady Ashburton, 22 March 1846, Everett to Calhoun, 6 April 1846, EEP, vol. 78.

[38]Everett to Holland, 15 June 1846, Everett to Peel, 15 June 1846, Everett to Aberdeen, 15 June 1846, Everett to John Russell, 27 July 1846, Everett to Louis McLane, 30 July 1846, EEP, vol. 78.

will add fuel to the flame, already so wild & fierce among a part of our population." He believed the outcome of the war depended upon its length. If it were a short war, then perhaps the country could escape without much harm, but should the war continue past the summer, the results would be doubtful.[39] In back of Everett's mind was the thought of a new popular hero emerging from the battlefield. The possibility that he might be a Whig did not enter his thoughts. For Everett, the nation's experience with one battlefield "Hero" was enough.[40]

At first, Everett attributed the adventure in Mexico to ineptitude on both sides. Mexico was at fault for her inability to recognize the loss of Texas, while America's action seemed an overreaction. Nevertheless, he thought that the racial makeup of the area precluded American territorial ambitions. "It would be impossible for us to hold a conquered province on any other footing than that of admission to the Union, & what sort of a Union it would be with a population half Castilian and Half Aztec?"[41]

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[39]Everett to Peel, 14 May 1846, Everett to Holland, 30 May 1846, EEP, vol. 78.

[40]Everett to Ashburton, 30 June 1846, Everett to Holland, 27 July 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

[41]Everett to Hiram Powers, 24 June 1846, Everett to Holland, 15 June 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

The summer of 1846 came and with it American advances into Mexico. Everett's sense of alarm heightened. To Lord Palmerston, Lord Ashburton, and Dr. Holland, he urged mediation of the crisis.[42] His observation of American designs adjusted to the new developments in the field as well. By mid-August he assumed that if peace came at this point, the boundary adjustment would include the area up to the Rio Grande and California. The latter he felt was inevitable since the same process of population flow was taking place there as had previously occurred in Texas. But Everett conceded that this was all unclear to him and suspected that few, if any, understood the policy intentions of the administration.[43]

By the end of 1846, Everett's fears concerning the impact of the war upon the minds of his countrymen were realized. With the failure to obtain peace with Mexico, he wrote his brother Alexander, considerable reinforcements were being gathered throughout the states. A great battle is to be fought with Santa Anna at San Luis Potosi. "So that we are all at once a war like & conquering people. Our acquisitions in Mexico are

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[42]Everett to Ashburton, 30 June 1846, Everett to Lord Palmerston, 27 July 1846, Everett to Holland, 27 July 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

[43]Everett to Dr. Walsh, 18 August 1846, EEP, vol. 79.

already scarcely less extensive than those of Cortez."[44] If at first Everett blamed both sides for the conflict, his diary contained second thoughts. Dismissing the President's message as "specious and worthless," he wrote the true causes "are to acquire new slave territory at the South to compensate the extension of the free territory at the Northwest."[45]

If the war was the result of a grasping slaveocracy what should be the policy of those who saw through the disguise of Manifest Destiny, what should be the position of the loyal opposition? In January 1846, confronted by the possibility of war over Oregon, Everett advised Winthrop that if war must come, the country should be put in a state of defense and all must give the government "honorable support." "Although as a question of ethics there is some difficulty as to the course to be pursued by a citizen, who conscientiously thinks that the war is unjust. Yet as a practical matter I am quite clear, that the best hope of getting out of it speedily & with credit is to support the government, in carrying it on."[46] Rather than pay heed to his conscience and risk

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[44]Everett to Alexander Everett, 31 December 1846, EEP, vol. 80; See also, Everett to Holland, 30 September 1846, Everett to Webster, 5 December 1846, EEP, vols. 79, 80.

[45]"Diary," 11 December 1846, EEP, vol. 165; See also, Everett to Madam Beaumont, 26 November 1850, Everett to The Duchess Angyll, 30 May 1847, EEP, vols. 94, 81.

[46]Everett to Winthrop, 8 January 1846, EEP, vol. 77.

the disruption of the political process or legitimatize civil disobedience Everett believed that conscience must be submerged beneath the need of national political order. When the issue arose in December as to what position Whigs should take in opposition to the Texan adventure, Everett advised Winthrop that Whigs should play both sides. Protest against the war in its "causes or rather pretexts; and then say to the administration, although we regard the war in this light, we know it is necessary to get creditably out of it; - take as many men & ships and as much money as you please."[47]

As the war frenzy grew and General Scott landed at Vera Cruz, Everett saw the destruction of his nation's values and the brutalization of its people. "We have sprung up at once into a nation of Conquerors. Heaven preserve us from the heroes," he penned. While there were those who had faith that the American system could absorb not only Texas and California, but all of Mexico, Everett saw such conquest as ushering in the end of the Union. With each victory, Everett's fears increased. "When the country is at war," he wrote his brother-in-law Sidney Brooks, "It will not do to be defeated, but it seems to me every success makes peace less easy to bring

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[47]Everett to Winthrop, 5 December 1846, RCWP.

about." Thus by the end of 1847, he was totally frustrated about the policy in Washington. As it appeared to him, no one had any idea of what policy was to be pursued. If peace were to come, it would have to wait for a change in the administration which Everett was sure would come in 1848.[48] The dilemma of a nation at war was perceptively expressed to Dr. Henry Holland.

> But it is very difficult to get out of a war, while your armies are in the enemy's country; if the enemy cannot or will not treat. If you withhold supplies, you expose your own People to be cut up; if you grant them, you furnish the Administration with the means of plunging deeper, into the war. It seems to be understood; that there is nobody in Mexico that dares treat with us or that could treat with us effectually; & it is said (but this I am sceptical about), that the people of substance wish us to remain for their protection, against their own military factions.[49]

While Everett was hostile to the war, he could not escape completely from the intense nationalist energy. An air of nationalist superiority was most evident in the months prior and following the peace treaty in March, 1848. Although his opposition to the "All Mexico" plan was dictated by sectional considerations, he also feared including an alien and "inferior" population into the body of a "superior" Anglo-Saxon one. It is obvious that Everett's four years as Minister to the Court of

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[48]"Diary," 11 April 1847, EEP, vol. 166, Everett to Winthrop, 1 January 1847, RCWP, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 27 April 1847, Everett to Col. Aspinwall, 15 August 1847, Everett to Bates, 30 September 1847, EEP, vols. 81, 82.

[49]Everett to Holland, 29 December 1847, EEP, vol. 83.

St. James did little to diminish his belief that the heritage of his ancestors was the most advanced in Western culture.[50]

His English experience, witnessing England's own problem with an "inferior" people, provided him a model. "I am not sure we have not seen in this country the acquisition of our Ireland," he wrote Lord Ashburton in December of 1847. "We have conquered our Ireland & shall as soon as possible yoke her destinies to our car," he told Lady Ashburton again in March of 1848. "If Lord A. should have another treaty to make with us," he remarked caustically, "he may have to do it with a Mexican Creole, -- perhaps with a Commanche Indian, -- as Secretary of State. Who knows but I may be transferred to some upper California University."[51]

It is also significant that most of his letters concerning the mingling of the races were sent to his English friends. Though motivated, in part, by an attempt to allay British fears that American ambitions were more extensive than public policy admitted, all letters conveyed a feeling of warmth and identification with a common set of values with which Everett had always

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[50]Everett to Aberdeen, 15 December 1847, EEP, vol. 83.

[51]Everett to Ashburton, 15 December 1847, Everett to Lady Ashburton, 23 March 1848, EEP, vols. 83, 84; See also Everett to Lady Ashburton, 15 November 1847, EEP, vol. 84.

sympathized and had hoped to spread throughout his country. In fact, he could identify more with Victorian England than with Polk's America.

A transplanted Anglo-Saxon tradition had already appeared in the older colonies of the east. This development, however, was threatened by this new increase of land and the introduction of outlandish people into the national fabric. While the United States would do more for the settlement of the area, it would be at the expense of older states. They would be the "great sufferers, having our comparatively advanced civilization perplexed by their frontier barbarism."[52] Not only would the country have to absorb this new race, but the acquisition of this wild and raw territory would produce an "invasion," by a host of adventurers, men of the disbanded Mexican and American armies, and backwoodsmen. These men, said Everett, represented what the Germans called Volkerwanderunger, at whose hand the Roman Empire collapsed.[53]

As the end of the conflict appeared, even Everett could not avoid the pride of victory. Though his own ideology had contained the element of divine guidance, Manifest Destiny seemed an extreme distortion. But with peace, Everett could no longer contain his nationalist

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[52]Everett to Holland, 23 March 1848, EEP, vol. 84.

[53]Everett to Aberdeen, 26 June 1848, EEP, vol. 85.

vigor and racial vanity. Where war with England could only produce sorrow, war with Mexico, with the Latin "race," might still figure in the grand design. Providence works in strange ways, he wrote his English friend, Miss Burdett Coutts. Think of all the land which is now open to European populations which previously were closed.[54] To Dr. Holland, he gave vent to his chauvinist tendency. "You know my opinion of this Mexican war," He wrote,

> nothing could be more flimsy & miserable than its pretexts nothing shabbier than our wresting their territory from these feeble enemies. It is however an inevitable operation, and probably the least objectionable form of it. California would soon have fallen into the hands of adventurers, who would have declared their independence, & joined the U. States. I dislike extremely the "manifest destiny" jargon, as it is called here; but it is quite clear from three centuries experiment, that the Latin race <u>cannot</u> settle these wastes, & that the Anglo-Saxon race can & will. If the Mexican nationality is to be preserved, it can only be by lopping off the feeble extremities & concentrating what there is of vitality in the Hispano-aztec system about the old capital.[55]

Everett's fears concerning dissolution of the Union at the hands of displaced western elements did not materialize. The threat in 1848 was not in the southwest nor from the "frontier rabble." Rather it came from the east and not from the mob, but from the class of men with whom Everett had always identified. The Mexican War might have been settled, and the party of War replaced

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[54]Everett to Burdett Coutts, 8 August 1848, EEP, vol. 85.

[55]Everett to Holland, 13 June 1848, EEP, vol. 85.

by the party of "moderation," but there were those in New England who found new energy from the Mexican adventure and were bent on eliminating slavery once and for all.

CHAPTER X

NATIONAL ORDER

The successful conclusion of the Mexican adventure did not bring the peace which Edward Everett hoped. Though the international scene was calmed, the politics of expansion had revived the question of slavery. There were many reasons for Everett's distaste of the abolitionist and Free-Soilers. Among these, however, was not an objection to their goals. "I am opposed to the extension of slavery where it does not exist and earnestly desire its cessation where it does," he wrote to Millard Fillmore on March 7, 1849.[1] Indeed, few challenged his antislavery credentials. His declaration of 1837 as well as southern opposition to his appointment as minister in 1841 were ample counterweights for his remarkable pledge in March, 1826. Although some were disappointed about Everett's failure to emphasize John Quincy Adams' antislavery attitudes during the eulogy in April, 1848, they were the exception. His stock among

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[1]Everett to Hon. Millard Fillmore, 7 March 1849, EEP, vol. 88.

antislavery elements was increased when as President of Harvard he defended the admittance of a Negro into the freshman class. By August 1848, there were some among the emerging Free-Soil party who considered him a potential candidate for their ticket.[2]

It was not sympathy for the slave system which brought Everett into opposition with the antislavery movement. It was deeper. The Free-Soil party, as Everett saw it, was interfering with party order and injecting emotionalism into politics. In rejecting Charles Sumner's query concerning his participation on the Free-Soil ticket, Everett expressed his hostility to third parties -- especially those formed around moral issues. Earlier, in September, 1846, he told Sumner, "In a word, my experience of the Anti-Masonic party led me to form a very unfavorable opinion of parties aiming to promote moral ends by political action." In August, 1848, he stated a similar opinion. "I was once, to some

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[2]Everett to Sumner, 2 May 1848, EEP, vol. 85, "Diary," 27 April 1848, EEP, vol. 167. In fact, Everett was especially careful to exclude any mention of party issues during the eulogy. "I endeavored to do justice to Mr. Adams' exertions in reference to Slavery; but in alluding to subjects on which extreme opinions are entertained on both sides, the man of 'moderate consels' is too apt to please neither," he wrote to D. S. Child. Everett to Child, 17 April 1848, EEP, vol. 84. Everett to Sumner, 4 August 1848, EEP, vol. 86; Mr. J. Cowles to Everett, 5 April 1847, Harvard College Papers, Second Series, 1846-1847, vol.14; Everett to M.J. Cowles, 13 April 1847, College Letters, vol.1; See also, Everett to Webster, 4 August 1848, Everett to Hon. John Davis, 10 August 1848, EEP, vol. 86, "Diary," 4 August 1848, EEP, vol. 167.

extent, concerned in such an organization & saw much of its demoralizing tendency. Without undertaking to say that it never should be resorted to I saw enough to convince me that the evils inseparable from all party action, peculiarly beset third parties."[3]

Though he respected Sumner and those who were going to Buffalo for their "honesty and pure intention," there were others whose motives he suspected. For Henry Holland, he pictured the new party as "a maneuver of personal ambition & intrigues than a great conscientious political movement." Had not the Whig party taken a position on slavery similar to the Free-Soilers? Most northern men of all parties, Everett pointed out, were hostile to slavery and its extension. Those who consciously sought an end to slavery, he concluded, must look to the established parties for effective results. He saw the many who entered the Free-Soil party, therefore, as dupes of the friends of Van Buren who were taking political advantage of the antislavery feeling in the North.[4]

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[3]Everett to Sumner, 5 September 1846, 4 August 1848, EEP, vols. 79, 86.

[4]Everett to Holland, 4 September 1848, EEP, vol. 86. For a more detailed copy of Everett's history of the Freesoil Party see, Everett to Holland, 13 November 1848, EEP, vol. 87.

Everett's objection to the politically ambitious was never directed toward his own party. Although disappointed in the nomination of Taylor -- he had supported Webster -- Everett easily adjusted to this new military hero.[5] The fact that Taylor's only claim to the nomination was his recent military success and popularity; that the party had neglected Webster, Clay, and McLean, whom Everett believed were ultimately more qualified, was dismissed with the vague remark, that Taylor had "sound and reliable personal qualities & principles, & /it/ was well understood that he would surround himself with the ablest & best men in the Country." Although he believed that the prime motive for choosing Taylor was political success, he only denounced the Free-Soilers as politically ambitious.[6]

Everett always rejected emotionalism, and this explains, for the most part, his double standard. Emotion he saw as irrationality, a loss of control, a subversion of the highest workings of the human mind and a threat to order. Continually, he denied or frowned upon the inclusion of abstract, emotional, and moral issues in the

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[5]Everett to Webster, 11 February 1848, EEP, vol. 84, Everett to Hon William Kent, 22 June 1848, EEP, vol. 85, Everett to Ashburton, 15 December 1847, EEP, vol. 83, Everett to Webster, 5 December 1846, EEP, vol. 80, Everett to Winthrop, 1 January, 1847, EEP, vol. 80.

[6]Everett to Holland, 12 November 1848, Everett to Kent, 22 June 1848, EEP, vols. 87, 85.

world of politics. The shock Everett received when Aberdeen stated that his actions would be motivated by morality rather than law was an example.[7] If Everett's position on the Mexican War came closer to the "conscience Whigs," conscience was not what motivated him. Although at a moment he might respond emotionally to the incursion, his opposition resulted from his fear that the national character might be transformed.

Likewise, slavery was an evil; all could agree. It should be eliminated, Everett believed. One might even understand how men could become emotional over this issue. But emotion and appeals to conscience disrupted the political order. Politics was a rational and orderly process. Emotion and appeals to conscience served only to incite the masses and prepare them for political manipulation. It was rational and acceptable that General Taylor should be supported; though not the best man, the style, manners and assumptions of his party were valid. It was also rational that Van Buren should want to be President again. But to reject and subvert the implied rules and thus the stability of politics, to organize a party around emotion was dangerous for the nation. Van Buren, he thought, was a politician; his prime interest was power. In this way the Free-Soil party was no different from the rest.[8] But a great

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[7]See Chapter VIII, p.196.

[8]Everett to The Duchess of Argyll, 7 May 1849, Everett to Peel, 23 December 1848, EEP, vols. 89, 87.

many whigs in many of the States, among others Massachusetts, voted for the 'Free soil' candidates, "on conscientious principles, and under the influence of these popular appeals to the feelings, which you can easily conceive such a name & such avowed cause would be likely to draw out," he wrote Sir Robert Peel on December 23, 1848. "But the 'Free soil' movement taken altogether & especially in connection with the antecedents of Mr. Van Buren (who had acquired the name of the 'Northern man with Southern principles') can only be considered in the light of an Intrique on a large scale."[9]

Soon after the election of '48, Everett warned Winthrop that the Whig party must not underestimate the Free-Soil movement in the North. He called on Whigs to take the offensive, to show how the antislavery position of this party differed from the Free-Soilers.[10] "I am for the end to slavery," he wrote Fillmore, but

> I greatly doubt whether these objects are to be prompted by popular agitation, & as far as it is right & proper that they should be drawn into the vortex of party. I look to the great whig party of the country, South as well as North, as the party by whose united councils, moderation, & patriotism this object is to be effected.[11]

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[9]Everett to Peel, 23 December 1848, EEP, vol. 87. Kinley Brauer, Cotton Versus Conscience: Massachusetts Whig Politics and Southwestern Expansion, 1843-48 (Lexington, 1967).

[10]Everett to Winthrop, 30 December 1848, RCWP.

[11]Everett to Fillmore, 7 March 1849, EEP, vol. 88.

Everett's attitude toward the abolitionists was consistent with his guidelines. Because the abolitionists operated outside the political spectrum, Everett did not question their motives. The abolitionists were "a small body of agitators generally honest & sincere," he wrote the British scientist Sir Charles Lyell. Nevertheless, he was critical of their actions and programs. Their sincerity, he believed, was nothing but an apology for "setting at nought all considerations not merely of prudence and expediency but of common sense & practicability." "They are purely destructive; they admit that their agitation looks only to unconstitutional emancipation," he continued, "without any thought of how, when or what next."[12] Since they believed, Everett wrote, that this could not be achieved under the present Constitution & Union of the United States, they proclaim their hatred for the document and their wish to sever the Union. He hoped that Lyell and other right-thinking Englishmen would be careful not to give weight to this fact in their dealings with these men. He praised and thanked Lyell and others like him for continuing to speak the voice of moderation. It did

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[12]Everett to Sir Charles Lyell, 8 October 1849, EEP, vol. 90. Lyell's book on slavery suggested that the "character of the blacks might be so improved by education as to elevate them to the capacity of enjoying liberty & supporting themselves." "Diary," 8 October 1849, EEP, vol. 168.

"incalculable good here: the opposite tone does nothing but add new bitterness to feelings already wrought to a frantic pitch of exasperation."[13] Thus by the end of 1849, Everett believed that politics in America was being dangerously transformed.[14] But perhaps the greatest shock to Everett and most indicative of the new mode of political thinking, was the defeat of his friend Robert C. Winthrop as Speaker of the House. He understood why free-soil Whigs opposed Winthrop, though finally they too realized their mistake.[15] The action of Southern Whigs who opposed Winthrop, however, Everett described as "absolute monomania." "But I know there are leading men at the South," he wrote, "who have been given by Providence to this suicidal and wicked plan of disunion, and I suppose it is more extensively cherished than I was aware."[16]

The decay of politics, Everett believed, was part of a larger national malady. Since his return from Europe, he had experienced the breakdown of the institutions

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[13] Ibid.

[14] "Diary," 10 November 1849, EEP, vol. 168; See also, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 10 November 1849, Everett to the Duchess of Argyll, 20 November 1849, EEP, vol. 91, "Diary," 7 November 1848, EEP, vol. 167.

[15] Everett to Winthrop, 15 December 1849, RCWP.

[16] Ibid.

of national stability. The great college of Harvard, though undergoing some improvement since his tenure, was still in a state of deterioration. The church had fallen into the hands of political agitators and theological extremists. "To church at eleven," he wrote in his diary, "Mr. Newall preached what he called an appropriate sermon principally on the subject of slavery; that the evil which prevails most extensively in Mass!"

He discovered that among those who called themselves ministers were men who tended toward atheism. This, he noted, was never mentioned in these radical sermons. Instead "we are dinned to death on the subject of Slavery." Symbolic of the decline of morality in America was talk of granting the "highest privilege, in the power of Congress" upon a "band of fanatics and adventurers, who have made trouble wherever they have set themselves down." Everett's reference was to the eventual admission of Utah into the Union. This territory made up of Mormons, a "mixture of rogues and dupes," who believed in the 'wretched farrago of lies & nonsense, which constitutes the Revelation of Jo/seph/ Smith."[17]

Finally, signs of disorder were apparent in the demise of international political stability. By March, Everett was convinced that the revolution in Paris would

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[17]"Diary," 11 April 1850, EEP, vol. 169; See also, "Diary," 8 May 1850, vol. 169,Everett to Webster, 3 January 1850, EEP, vol. 91; Everett to Winthrop, 13 August 1850, RCWP.

move from anarchy to despotism.[18] Though he criticized moderate men for their failure to bring about great reforms, his odium was reserved for the mob and their intellectual theorists.[19] After receiving news of "mob action" at the Tuileries, he commented, "It is in this way that the French theorists teach the world the beauty of their doctrines." And then concluded, "It appears quite plain that the Revolution was improvised: if that can be said to come improviso for which the minds of men have been prepared by the most inflammatory appeals for years."[20] During the remaining months of 1848 and into 1849, news continued to flow into America. Everett believed his initial fear was a reality now. The revolution in Paris was "opening a new Pandora's casket."[21]

It became clear to Everett that the continuity of English and American life, the mutual traditions and values to which he had pointed in 1824, were now most

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[18]Everett to Mssrs R. Hogan and others, 28 February 1848, EEP, vol. 84.

[19]"Diary," 18 March 1848, 20 March 1848, EEP, vol. 167, Everett to Holland, 23 March 1848, EEP, vol. 84.

[20]"Diary," 28 March 1848, EEP, vol. 167.

[21]Everett to Rev. Dr. Hawtrey, 19 February 1849, EEP, vol. 88; See also, "Diary," 18 April 1848, EEP, vol. 167, Everett to Berdette Coutts, 15 May 1848, Everett to George Bancroft, 16 June 1848, Everett to Holland, 28 August 1849, Everett to Horatio Greenough, 10 September 1849, EEP, vols. 85, 90.

obvious. The disruptions of European political life, which England alone had escaped, proved that the American and English systems of government were unique within the family of nations. The events of 1848, he wrote to Dr. Holland, taught us, in a very practical manner, the wisdom of our systems in preventing revolutions; "by giving to the mass of people beforehand & in the regular operation of the Constitution all the great objects of human desire, as far as Constitutions and Laws can give them."[22] In June, 1848, he wrote to George Bancroft,

> I share your anxieties about the prospects of Germany. You & I have lived there, know how much the generous & independent spirit of the People in that Noble country had to put up with from the insolence of the bureaucracy & the principles. But the growth of a safe and practical liberty must be <u>historical</u>. If tried in the way of abrupt revolutions the operation is almost sure to be bloody, fluctuating, & for the time disastrous.[23]

It was the Anglo-American race alone which was prepared to carry out the great mission as defender of liberty.[24]

As to the role America must assume toward "legitimate revolutions," such as the Italian experience, Everett had this advice: it was important to give more than mere sympathy, we must give "substantial aid." But

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[22]Everett to Holland, 23 March 1848, Everett to The Duchess of Argyll, 31 March 1848, EEP, vol. 84.

[23]Everett to Bancroft, 16 June 1848; See also, 11 July 1848, EEP, vol. 85.

[24]Everett to Lord Ellesmore, 18 September 1848. The word "race" to describe "nationalities" is used by Everett throughout his writings, especially during the period of the 1850's. But "race" was also descriptive of the

"substantial aid" was defined as a "bright example; the instructive lesson of experience." "If we wish to recommend free institutions we must show them in their fruits."[25]

Though Everett was troubled by these European affairs he took great pride in the fact that both America and England had escaped the revolutionary impulse. These events reinforced his notion that political systems grew out of a people's historic development rather than abstract theories. This was the lesson of the first French Revolution as well as the second. The great error was in thinking that one could apply the rights of Englishmen and Americans to all people. This he believed is what the French sought to do in 1789.[26] There was a

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biological and physiological distinctions as well. In this particular case Everett meant both, but heavily leaned on the cultural definition, that is, the Anglo-Saxon "race."

[25]Everett to Messrs. R. Hogan and others, 23 November 1847, EEP, vol. 83.

[26]Everett to Dr. Whewell, 3 September 1849, EEP, vol. 90. In 1848 at the outbreak of violence in Europe, Everett wrote to Miss Coutts in London merely making some conjecture as to the nature of the anglo-saxon "race," especially as it compared to the French. His brief conclusion rested on the "rational & practical character of protestantism." "I mean the application to public affairs of the conscientious spirit which influences virtuous persons in their private transactions." While Catholicism when sincere developed at best the faculties of affection, imagination and sentiment, these were not enough qualities, especially when it had to resist the "fervid action of southern blood." Everett to Coutts, 15 May 1848, EEP, vol. 85. These views rarely appeared again in his writing. His concern was not religious during this period, but "racial," in the cultural and historical sense.

lesson here for advocates of Manifest Destiny as well. The expansion of American institutions to non-Anglo-American races was questionable. The American system, Everett perceptively concluded, was the product of an Anglo-American historical development and therefore relevant to certain historical circumstances.[27] But it was this nationalist bias which led Everett to mistakenly believe that Europe's revolutionaries were merely seeking to adopt the Anglo-American system.

Everett's fear of and hostility to political disorder, his renewed infatuation with racial categories set the framework in which America 's own revolutionary past was divorced from abstract revolutionary thought.[28] In his Bunker Hill oration, on June 17, 1850, Everett dismissed the Revolution's role in the history of ideas and set it within the context of racial history. No longer confined by anti-British sentiment at home, Everett described the colonists as offsprings of the Anglo-Saxon race. In sentiment and by nature, they were English in their attitudes. Within the minds of those who struggled with questions of revolutions, noted Everett, was a strong sentiment of loyalty to the mother country.[29] By 1776, natural growth had prepared the

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[27]Edward Everett, "Battle of Bunker Hill, 17 June 1850, Orations, 3:18-20.

[28]Edward Everett, "The Nineteenth of April at Concord, 19 April 1850, Orations, 2:658.

[29]Everett, "Bunker Hill," Orations, 3:21-23.

people for self-government. This great moment was not the mere whim of philosophes or the results of demogogues, but rather a culmination of the unfolding laws of progress in the social, moral, and political world.[30]

The culmination of this historical movement was not the revolution, however. It was the more stabilized condition of the constitutional union. The confederation was not the result of a theoretical formulation upon which rational men agreed. Rather, it was a "Union unconsciously formed." "It sprang from the historical conditions of the past, and the imperious necessities of the present. It was the law of our political existence."[31] It was the law of nature and its author was not man but the highest Being. It was the historic end of our true nature, the result of that natural process called evolution which "melted families into clans, and clans into States; which binds the particles of matter together; which suspends a planet in the sky, or hangs a dew-drop upon a rose-leaf."[32]

The pinnacle, the final act of the great providential plan, was the formation of the "more perfect union." Addressing himself to the present generation of men who threatened the Union, Everett expressed what he considered

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[30] Ibid., pp. 27-28.

[31] Ibid., p. 29. Emphasis mine.

[32] Ibid., p. 30.

his most original thought. The Union, he stated, was the first "Peace Congress" in the World. The Union was an agreement reached by various states of common identity, of descent, language, and faith for the preservation of peace among this people. This was the real Peace Congress, which all of Europe now hoped for, and is the admiration of the world. It was time to return to the "spirit of '75 to guide us safely amidst the dizzy activities of the times."[33] It was our destiny and the fulfillment of God's plan, to remain the guide for the future. Returning once again to the metaphor of nature, Everett concluded, "may God grant that those who look to us for guidance and encouragement, may be able to transplant the germs of constitutional liberty to the ancient gardens of the earth, that the clouds which now darken the horizon of Europe may clear away, and the long-deferred hopes of the friends of freedom be fulfilled!"[34]

In a series of letters written to his English friends, evidence appears that much of Everett's nationalist rhetoric, especially his notion that the Constitution settlement was a "Peace Congress," was shaped by his desire to maintain power in hands of the ruling elite. Military force, should only be used as a last resort to maintain order, he told J. E. Denison, for it does

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[33] Ibid., pp. 32-34.

[34] Ibid., p. 34.

nothing but stir up the people.[35] The American system allowed the "popular idea" to progress while at the same time it enabled "wealth" to have weight enough.

"Property qualifications" were illusory mechanisms for preserving power in the "hands of the better classes." It was rare, Everett said, that a "pennyless demagogue" came to power. Although payment to members "would put it in the power of a class of men to live in parliament, who otherwise could not do so," few men of this class would be chosen. The English ruling class, therefore, should not fear the Chartist reform. Their whole program could be accepted and "not one of the pillars of your system would be touched." Finally, appealing again to the success of his friends in America, Everett noted that "our universal suffrage and continually recurring elections are in reality great conservative principles in this country." The English ruling elite need not fear, for they could calm the radical and popular agitators through the mechanisms of popular institutions and still maintain power in the hands of the "better class of men."[36]

The problem confronting Everett, however, was that the challenge to stability in America was not from the disenfranchised. Rather, he believed, it was those who sought to transform the national institutions of

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[35]Everett to Denison, 2 May 1848, EEP, vol. 85.

[36]Everett to Holland, 23 March 1848, 2 May 1848, EEP, vols. 84, 85.

stability into tools for moral reform. Disruptions inevitably occurred, Everett said, when the state assumed the role of legislating morality. There were many things concerning the welfare of the people which the state could not, except indirectly, promote. The freer the government, the greater the individual responsibility for social welfare.[37] But Everett had forgotten history once again. The Constitutional settlement of 1787 and the Missouri Compromise gave slavery a legal foundation and therefore committed the government to the moral question of the day. Nevertheless, Everett's desire for order colored all his thinking. The disrupters were those who forced the issue of slavery into politics again.

Everett directed his hostility, therefore, towards the "ultras" of both sections. The ironical thing about their programs, Everett wrote, was that their positions, if fulfilled, would not provide the result hoped for. If disunion came would those in the North who wish for the abolition of slavery have any greater influence over that fact? By defeating moderates, could the South counter radicalism in the North? If separation occurred, agitation against slavery would not decrease but

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[37]Everett to Dr. Whewell, 3 September 1849, EEP, vol. 84.

increase in intensity and power.[38] Extremism breeds extremism, Everett believed; for as northern abolitionists intensified their attack, those in the South who spoke out against slavery declined.[39]

There were those in Congress as well who were seeking to pacify the forces of extremism. Though the Wilmot Proviso was defeated in Congress in 1848, debates continued in Congress over the Proviso's central principle; "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist" in any territories so acquired. The question was intensified as gold in California attracted a population to that area numerous enough for admission into the Union. Thus, with California demanding admission the stage was set for the great debate of 1850.

News of a possible congressional compromise in February, 1850, did not alleviate Everett's growing sense of concern. "Unless some southern man of influence has courage enough to take ground against the extension of slavery; & in favor of its abolition in the jurisdiction of the United States, we shall infallibly separate: not perhaps immediately but before long," he wrote Winthrop.[40] Though Everett continued to despair, a

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[38]Everett to N. W. Senoir, 1 January 1850, Everett to Hon A. Lawrence, 1 January 1850, Everett to Rev Dr. Gilman, 30 January, 1850, EEP, vol. 91, 92, Everett to Winthrop, 24 January 1850, RCWP.

[39]"Diary," 15 June 1849, 16 February 1850, EEP, vols. 168, 169.

[40]Everett to Winthrop, 1 February 1850, EEP, vol. 92.

ray of hope appeared with the possibility of compromise. Though historians have pointed to the significant contributions of Clay, Douglas, and Fillmore, among others, Everett believed that the destiny of the compromise depended solely on the position taken by Daniel Webster.[41] Upon receipt of Webster's March 7th speech, Everett expressed a cautious optimism. The speech, he believed, showed signs of "great ability" and was "well calculated if moderate counsels prevail to pilot the country through the broken and stormy sea."[42] Everett, however, had great reservation about one particular section of the pending bill -- that concerning fugitive slaves. Here was the great "pitfall," he wrote Winthrop, in confidence. All attempts to make laws more stringent on that subject would not only be impossible, but would be wholly distasteful to the community in this part of the Union. It is noteworthy that two days earlier Everett wrote a lengthy letter to Webster congratulating him on his position, but never once mentioned reservations about the fugitive slave bill.[43]

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[41]Everett to Winthrop, 18 February 1850, RCWP, Everett to Abbott Lawrence, 5 March 1850, EEP, vol. 92.

[42]"Diary," 11 March 1850, EEP, vol. 169.

[43]Everett to Winthrop, 14 March 1850, RCWP, Everett to Webster, 12 March 1850, EEP, vol. 92.

This fact suggests that Everett's reservation about the fugitive slave section was most likely motivated by political considerations rather than opposition to the idea. If the compromise had received wide support it appears that Everett would have endorsed the proposal. But this did not occur. Letters began to circulate which offered full support for Webster's position. Torn between his friendship and the political hostility apparent throughout the state, Everett finally decided that he could not sign any statement endorsing the position of Webster. Privately he argued that to do so was inconsistent with his 1838 stand as governor when he had signed a joint resolution by both houses of the state's legislature opposing the annexation of Texas. Constitutionally, he believed the bill was on firm ground, but such a measure was sure to cause trouble in the North. "I am quite sure it could not be enforced," he wrote Robert Walsh, "and I think the attempt to enforce it would revolutionize the politics of all the free States."[44] Nevertheless, once the compromise passed, Everett wrote Webster that the results made him happy. Everett also hoped that those who had left the Whig party because of the antislavery

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[44]Everett to R. Walsh, 20 March 1850, Everett to Webster, 22 March 1850, Everett to Abbott Lawrence, 2 April 1850, Everett to Webster, 3 April 1850, Everett to Lawrence, 29 April 1850, EEP, vol. 92, "Diary," 20 March 1850, 29 March 1850, EEP, vol. 169, Everett to Winthrop, 10 April 1850, RCWP.

controversy would now return to the fold.[45] Politics would return to its normal condition.

During the previous years, Everett had sought to preserve New England's power within the transformation and adjustment of America's social and political order. Though the union had come under attack it was relatively secure, as Everett perceived it, when compared to the threat to New England power. The results was a heightened sectionalism. The revolutionary events of 1848 and the political crisis of 1850 tended to reverse the focus and intensified Everett's nationalism.

As noted earlier, Everett had become aware of the fragmentation and disintegration of national institutions. Thus it became exceedingly important for national stability to maintain a party above section within which moderate men of all camps could unite. This was Everett's vision for the Whig party.[46] But except for an attachment to Winthrop, the Whig party had "scarcely anything else, in reference to which they are able to act in concert." This he believed "induces a completed politieal paralysis."[47]

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[45]Everett to Webster, 13 September 1850, EEP, vol. 94.

[46]Everett to Sir Charles Lyell, 19 Mareh 1850, Everett to Sprague, 13 September 1850, Everett to J. M. Chase, 30 September 1850, EEP, vols. 92, 94, Everett to Winthrop, 23 September 1850, RCWP.

[47]Ibid., 10 February 1850.

The struggle over replacement for Senator Webster, who had entered the Department of State, for example, only aggravated the already factionalized condition of the Whig party in Massachusetts.

But this condition was simply a reflection of the country, Everett thought. We lack great men to rally around, he had written Col. Aspinwall in 1849. If there were great men, "they were weighed down by the difficulty of the crisis, or paralyzed by want of concert; or insanely occupied with projects of personal ambition. A strong bold Southern man, who would take an open and firm ground against slavery, would carry all before him in the Southern States; but such a man I fear, is not to be found."[48]

The spirit of patriotism, the very essence for preserving the Union and a national party had all but disappeared. While preparing his "Bunker Hill" oration in May, 1850, Everett entered this somber note into his diary:

> Employed all the day in vain attempts to say something interesting about Bunker-Hill. The fault may be in me, but it seems to me, there is no longer any patriotic feeling in the country. All interest in every other topic is eaten up by 'abolitionism,' which from the uncharitableness & ferocity with which it is pursued, I infer to be not a movement of Christian love, but another form of selfish passion.[49]

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[48]Everett to Col. Aspinwall, 5 February 1850, EEP, vol. 92.

[49]"Diary," 24 May 1850, EEP, vol. 169.

And in the preface to his "orations" prepared in 1850, he wrote the presence of "comprehensive patriotism" in 1820 and 1830, "prompted a strain of sentiment which does not now, as it seems to me, find cordial response from the people in any part of the country."[50]

Washington's birthday provided Everett an opportunity, therefore, to inculcate the spirit of patriotism into the hearts and minds of Americans. What better symbol of loyalty to the nation could be found than George Washington. Here was the embodiment of harmony and moderation.[51] "I am not an alarmist," Everett told his audience on the 22nd of February, 1850. "I have never been." In fact, he said, he was most often prone to look to the bright side in reference to the nation's future. But if the unkind feeling between the sections of the country were not relaxed, if men could not make up their minds to live in good faith under the constitution and the laws -- "that constitution which was framed by our fathers, as good, as wise, as patriotic as ourselves, and under which the country has enjoyed a degree of prosperity unexampled in the world" -- if the fierce spirit of hostility continued; the separation of the States would surely result. This event would be

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[50]Edward Everett, "Preface," Orations, 1:xi.

[51]Edward Everett, "The Birthday of George Washington," 22 February 1851, Orations, 3:59, 62-63. A more complete discussion of Washington as a nationalist symbol is found in Chapter XII.

followed by a series of wars which not only would change the very nature of the country, but the cause of constitutional liberty forever. "For I regard it as demonstrable that, in the event of a separation, as certainly as the sun will set in the west, the sun of the republic will go down from the meridian and set in blood."[52] Americans had become sanguine in their success, he admonished. In the process of growth, they had forgotten the ringing theme which George Washington offered in his great "Farewell Address": "Union, Union, Union."[53]

Nevertheless the political situation worsened. The conflict which erupted in Boston over the capture of fugitive slaves in October, 1850 depressed Everett. "I have never known the political horizon so dark as at the present day," he entered in his diary on November 2, 1850. "The late occurrences in Boston seem to show that the fugitive Slave Law cannot be enforced; & the indications from the South are measures will be taken to dissolve the Union. Much difficulty will exist in the modus in quo, but the result I fear is inevitable. It is this way that the Sin of Slavery works its own punishment."[54]

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[52] Ibid., p. 65.

[53] Ibid., p. 64.

[54] "Diary," 2 November 1850, EEP, vol. 169; See also, Everett to Holland, 12 November 1850, EEP, vol. 94, "Diary," 26 November 1850, vol. 169.

For the remainder of the year, Everett's thought reflected this despair. The election returns of November indicated a gain for the Free-Soilers at the expense of the Whigs. Everett, in desperation and unclear what direction to take, suggested that if the Democrats were willing to risk disunion for the sake of election victories, it might be best for Whigs merely to throw full responsibility upon the shoulders of that party. It was impossible for rational men to save the Union as long as the Democrats maintained their alliance with Free-Soil elements, he thought. Therefore, they must be forced to break their alliance with the agitators. Until that was accomplished, there was nothing to be done.[55] He advised Winthrop that if the state of South Carolina wished to secede, then perhaps a commission of three could be sent to work out peaceful separation.[56]

Although Everett was extremely critical of those who continually challenged the motives, character, and policy of individuals of opposing sections; in the months ahead he could not refrain from such judgments.[57] He was especially critical of those who chose Sumner rather than his friend Winthrop to replace Webster in the Senate.

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[55]Everett to H. Ketchum, 12 November 1850, EEP, vol. 94.

[56]Everett to Winthrop, 4 December 1850, RCWP.

[57]Ibid., pp. 64-65.

While Everett's opinion of Sumner in November, 1850, was generally friendly -- he referred to the antislavery leader as "an extremely able & highly accomplished person," -- he had grave reservations because of Sumner's extremist opinions.[58] Although none of Sumner's friends and few of his opponents doubted that he had remained "creditably" aloof from the election contest, Everett believed that the whole affair was indicative of Sumner's corrupt character. Webster's strong hostility to the candidacy only reinforced this view. In January, 1851, Everett attacked Sumner's motives and the very nature of the coalition of Democrats and Free Soilers. To Samuel Eliot, he wrote, "It seems to be thought impossible for Sumner to get any more votes than he has received; but when we consider that he has once or twice lacked five, there is much ground to fear that corruption or even accident may turn the scale." In April, Sumner was finally elected, and Everett was certain that it was accomplished by the most discreditable means.[59] If in February he had called for the end of personal villification, by May he advised Webster that before the legislature adjourned, a short address to the people be made presenting them with information concerning the bargain.[60] To Winthrop he wrote, "With

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58 Everett to Holland, 12 November 1850, EEP, vol. 94.

59 Everett to S. A. Eliot, 7 February 1851, "Diary," 24 April 1851, EEP, vol. 170; David Donald, Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War (New York, 1960), p. 196.

60 Everett to Webster, 1 May 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

respect to S. I have tried hard not to let his political course shock my faith in his personal honesty, but I must own the coalition of this winter & his hypocritical letter of acceptance are most too much for my charity."[61] If Everett had hoped in his "Bunker Hill" address to raise the spirit of compromise and moderation, to end personal attacks, his own inability to do so indicates his own confused state. Even Everett, who possessed a moderate temperament, who seemed conscious of the results of heightened emotionalism, could not escape the force of polarization.

Everett's hope that Webster could assume the role of a national leader soon dissipated. If any man deserved the support of union men, he believed, it was Webster. Webster had demonstrated in the past, under arduous circumstances, a responsibility and duty to preserve the nation. His position allowed friends of the Union in the South and North to stand against those who sought dissolution. And in the North, blood did not flow in resistance to the law because of his actions.[62]

Once again the force of factionalism played havoc with Everett's aspirations. In June, 1851, Winthrop,

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[61]Everett to Winthrop, 22 May 1851, EEP, vol. 97; See also, Everett to Fillmore, 26 July 1851, EEP, vol. 96, "Diary," 25 October 1851, EEP, vol. 170, Everett to Holland, 10 May 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

[62]Everett to N. Hale, 16 April 1851, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 6 June 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

defeated in his bid for senator, decided to run for governor of the state. If he were to be successful, however, a unified Whig party would have to emerge from the nominating convention. While the presidential contest was still more than a year away, Everett felt any discussion of Webster for president would split the state party.[63] The situation was further complicated as news concerning the Whig convention in New York arrived. That convention had passed a platform which Everett believed was inspired by William Seward. This platform, Everett thought, leaned toward the radical wing of the party and was forced upon conservatives. Certain friends of Winthrop, however, hoped to have this platform or something similar adopted by the convention meeting in Springfield. This action, Everett believed, would certainly hurt Webster's position.[64] The obvious clash between Webster and Winthrop supporters persuaded Everett against attending the convention.[65]

Situations of this kind convinced Everett that the disruption of the political process was directly related

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[63]Everett to Winthrop, 14 July 1851, 31 July 1851, RCWP.

[64]Everett to Sprague, 4 September 1851, EEP, vol. 98.

[65]Everett to George T. Curtis, 5 September 1851, Everett to Sprague, 6 September 1851, EEP, vol. 98; See also, Everett to Sprague, 4 September 1851, EEP, vol. 98.

to the unresolved question of slavery. In April, 1851, bemoaning the fate of his country, he wrote to Miss Berdette Coutts of England. Though recent events in California proved that slavery would not be extended there and news from the border states indicated a strong desire for emancipation, hopes of ending slavery in the South and southwestern states -- where tobacco, rice, cotton, and sugar were cultivated were slim and would take several generations. Even emancipation in certain sections raised serious questions. If free blacks remained where they were, "they would exist in a condition of an inferior caste, without property, without education, & smarting under the recollections of recent oppressions, and incapable from physical diversity of being gradually absorbed into the white population."

> They would therefore be situated among us, pretty much as the celtic population of Ireland would be if taken up in mass & deposited in your midland counties: except; that difference of color and transition from a much more degraded state, would make the condition of our colored population much more deplorable.[66]

Only when slavery clearly threatened the union did Everett approach the African Colonial Society plan.[67]

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[66]Everett to Coutts, 8 April 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

[67]Everett to Rev Joseph Tracy, 14 March 1849, EEP, vol. 88; See also, Everett to Fillmore, 15 April, 1851, EEP, vol. 97. In fact in April 1849 Everett had agreed to speak before the society but ill health forced his cancellation. Everett to Prof. Greenleaf, 2 April 1849, 7 May 1849, EEP, vol. 89.

The colonization approach was, in addition, consistent with his temper and nationalism. It was peaceful and moderate and, in the final analysis, might eliminate the stain of slavery from the nation by producing "positive" results. Colonization, as Everett conceived it, would provide Africa with individuals capable of "promoting the civilization and christianization of that continent, which Providence has confided to them & to them alone." Think of the great benefit to Africa, he wrote Professor Greenleaf in 1849, "the regeneration of which I cannot but think the path appointed by Providence for the elevation of the descendants of Africa throughout the world."[68]

In April, 1851, Everett wrote to President Fillmore that it was most important that a philanthropic idea be presented to the public which would satisfy them that something can be done in reference to slavery. Colonization was the answer. "It seems to me to hold a gleam of hope, in reference to the condition of the colored race in America, to the effectual suppression of the slave trade, -- to the civilization of Africa, & the final abolition of slavery."[69]

By 1851, Everett was completely mesmerized by the possibilities of colonization. "I am more & more

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[68]Everett to Greenleaf, 28 May 1849, EEP, vol. 89.

[69]Everett to Fillmore, 15 April 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

convinced," he wrote the Reverend John B. Pinney, "that the multiplication of the colored race has been permitted in this country to serve as the agency for the ultimate civilization of Africa, & thereby removing the great blot & shame from the condition of our country." Whites have continually encountered a natural physical disability in their attempts at missionary work on that continent. But it has been shown, Everett continued, that members of the "colored race" even after undergoing "modifications" abroad remain protected against the adversities of their native land.[70]

Furthermore, the eventual abolition of slavery in America depended on this development in Africa. There was a direct relationship, Everett said, between the condition of Africans in America and elsewhere and the evolution of the African continent. "As long as the natives of Britain were held as slaves at home, they were carried and sold as slaves abroad."[71] This plan of colonization, therefore, envisioned America as the vehicle of cultural uplifting. Slavery was seen as a training ground for black missionaries.[72]

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[70]Everett to Rev. John B. Pinney, 5 May 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ibid.

Everett's own particular brand of "racism" was not the classic racism common in the nineteenth century. In fact, Everett denied, both privately and publicly, the inherent inferiority of the black race. To Pinney, he wrote, that although the natives of Africa with whom whites had come in contact conveyed an "impressible docile character," they were not inferior. "Although there are numerous varieties in this as in every other great branch of the human family, I consider the opinion that the African races, in the aggregate, are inferior in intellect to ourselves as a gross error."[73] On August 1, 1851, Everett wrote an article for the Albany Journal and Telegraph concerning the life of Abdul Rahaman, a freed slave. In his conclusion, he said,

> I would close this hasty and imperfect sketch with one or two general remarks. The first is, that whatever may be the case with some of the tribes of Africa, there are highly improved races on that vast continent. Abdul was no doubt a person of superior endowments, but it is clear that he belonged to a people not essentially below Europeans and Americans in their capacity for intellectual improvement. And how few Americans or European, after forty years' bondage, would have come out like Abdul, unbroken in body and mind! Let us all learn by this example to respect the African race, as one whose best specimens will not suffer in comparison with our own, and remember, that there are races in Europe, which fall far below the boasted standard of Caucasian blood.[74]

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[73] Ibid.

[74] Edward Everett, "Abdul Rahaman," Albany Journal and Telegraph, August 1851, in Orations, 3:186-194.

Yet while Everett rejected the biological inferiority of the black race, his judgment of the evolutionary progress of different races was nevertheless racist. As was customary in his day, race was defined within a cultural framework. As noted earlier, Everett often referred to the Anglo-Americans as a race. Thus, Everett's conception of colonization operated under the assumption that the American black man was superior to the African black man. He considered the barbarous condition of slavery a blessing for the African, for through this condition the seed of an advanced culture was transplanted in the black race.

As 1851 neared its end, Everett worried about the contest for the presidency. "If the whigs would unite," he wrote Moses Stuart in September, 1851, "they could take the presidency."[75] As for Daniel Webster's chances, Everett believed success depended on the strength of Union sentiment throughout the country, especially in the South.[76] "Do they care for the Union? Do they think Anti-Slavery agitation will shake it," he asked rhetorically. "And if so, do they propose in this way to sacrifice these to whom it is owing that there is any Union feeling at the North."[77]

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[75]Everett to Stuart, 29 September 1851, EEP, vol. 98.

[76]Everett to General H. S. Foote, 29 November 1851, EEP, vol. 99.

[77]Everett to Webster (Private and Confidential) 22 December 1851.

By May, 1852, Everett saw Webster's hopes as slim. Success might come if both Scott's and Fillmore's adherents, unable to gain a majority, united around Webster. But this did not occur. Though fifty-two ballots were taken, no movement toward Webster developed. Finally, on the fifty-third ballot, General Scott received the nomination of the Baltimore Convention.[78] On June 21, 1852, Everett wrote in his diary, "General Scott receives the nomination at Baltimore today on the 53rd ballot. After a protracted and fervent struggle; in intellectual qualities & political experience the least qualified of his three competitors but a man of firmness, sound principles & a certain elevation of character."[79]

General resentment among Webster supporters continued after the convention. Webster himself entered a state of self-imposed silence. Everett, concerned that a disorganized party would enter the November election, sent letters to both Fillmore and Webster in an attempt to soften the defeat at Baltimore.[80] He strongly objected to those who raised Webster's standard in the coming election. This, he believed, would only cause the

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[78]Everett to Holland, 24 May 1852, Everett to G. J. Abbott, 23 April 1852, EEP, vol. 100.

[79]"Diary," 21 June 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

[80]Everett to Webster, 22 June 1851, Everett to Fillmore, 23 June 1852, EEP, vol. 101.

defeat of Whigs seeking positions in Congress.[81] As time went on, Webster's silence continued to trouble Everett. Not only should Webster support Scott out of a spirit of magnanimity, but common sense demanded this action as well. "Any other course would be not only ruinous but unfair," he wrote Sidney Brooks, at the end of July. If Webster keeps up his silence, he told G. J. Abbot, in October, it will not only be to the extreme detriment of the whig cause, but destructive of his good name. To the end, Webster refused to endorse Scott and eventually said that if he were to vote he would cast his ballot for Franklin Pierce.[82]

Webster's silence was further complicated by his declining health. Rumors soon spread that he would leave the post as Secretary of State. On October 27, 1852, Everett received a letter from President Fillmore offering him the State Department for the remainder of his term. Everett informed the President of his disposition to accept the post, but said he would have to delay a final decision until he could assess the state of his family. Three days later, Everett sent a telegram to

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[81]"Diary," 13 June 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

[82]Everett to Sidney Brooks, 20 June 1852, Everett to G. J. Abbott, 14 October 1852, EEP, vols. 101, 102; Richard Current, Daniel Webster and the Rise of National Conservatism (Boston, 1955), pp. 179-180.

the President informing him of his acceptance. Soon after, he was on his way to Washington.[83]

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[83]Everett to Fillmore, 27 October 1852, EEP, vol. 96, "Diary," 27 October 1852, 30 October 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

CHAPTER XI

ORGANIC NATIONALISM

On November 2, 1852, Everett went to the polls and voted for the Scott electoral ticket. Two days later, at 8 o'clock, he left for Washington. He arrived November 6th after a day's stay in New York.[1] Everett was no novice to the area of foreign affairs. In 1822 Webster had called on him for advice on events in Greece. Three years later, when elected to the House of Representatives, he was appointed to the Foreign Affairs Committee where he served for a period of ten years, three as chairman. His embassy to London fully prepared him, as much as any man, to assume the duties of the office. In addition, in October, 1850, Daniel Webster asked him to draft a letter in answer to the Austrian charge d' affaires, the Chevalier Hülsemann. His friend Winthrop wrote in his memoirs that while Crittenden might have been the wisest choice for the post, "Everett is

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[1]"Diary," 2 November 1852, 4 November 1852, 5 November 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

admirably qualified to finish up Webster's work and was cut out for a minister of Foreign Affairs."[2]

Five days after his arrival, Secretary Everett was handed a proposal submitted by France and England calling for a tripartite treaty to preserve the political status quo of Cuba. Everett recorded in his diary that all members of the cabinet opposed such an alliance, with the Attorney General most vehement in his feelings, saying that "Cuba must eventually be ours; but we did not want it now."[3] The French and British proposal, originally sent to Webster on April 23, 1852, specifically called for a convention of the three parties (Britain, France, and the United States) to disclaim any intention, now and forever, of possessing the island of Cuba. All parties, in addition, would bind themselves in opposition to annexation by any other power. The three parties, finally, would not seek exclusive control over the island nor assume or exercise dominion over it.[4] Though Webster

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[2]Robert C. Winthrop, A Memoir of Robert C. Winthrop (Boston, 1897), p. 161; "Diary," 21 October 1850, EEP, vol. 169. Correspondence between Webster and Everett concerning the latter's role in the Hulsmann affair is found in vols. 94, 95, 232. The draft of Everett's Hulsmann's letter is found in EEP, vol. 94 in Everett to Webster, 24 October 1850.

[3]"Diary," 10 November 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

[4]John F. Crampton to Webster, 8 July 1852, United States State Department, Correspondence on the Proposed Tripartite Convention Relative to Cuba (1853) (hereafter cited as State Department, Cuba).

had briefly responded that the United States' traditional policy precluded such an alliance, he agreed to turn the proposal over to the President. Webster's declining health and the presidential election caused a delay in the official response.[5] It eventually became Everett's task to draft the answer.

In the opening paragraphs, Everett conveyed the President's sentiment that no Senate would accept nor, in fact, did the Constitution of the United States permit a treaty which would bind this country to a particular policy for all coming time and, in this case, prevent it in the future, under altered circumstances, to purchase an area as it had done in the past. The proposal was inconsistent with one of the oldest of traditions of the federal government, namely an aversion to "political alliances" with European powers. This policy, Everett noted, was clearly conveyed in George Washington's "Farewell Address" and Thomas Jefferson's Inaugural in 1801. The experience with the French Treaty of 1778 had created grave problems for this country during the years of the French Revolution, and nothing but the "unbounded influence of Washington rescued the Union from the perils of that crisis, and preserved our neutrality."[6]

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[5]Webster to Count de Sartiges, 29 April 1852, Crampton to Webster, 8 July 1852, State Department, Cuba.

[6]Everett to Sartiges, 1 December 1852, State Department, Cuba.

But events in the United States during the preceding few years, especially the rise of the "Young America" faction within the Democratic party and southern demands for the annexation of Cuba added another dimension to the issue. This proposal, on the one hand, provided an opportunity for the Fillmore administration and the Whig party to steal some political thunder from the Democrats. On the other, it could divert national attention away from the internal sectional struggle which was endangering the Union.[7]

Everett was suspicious of the emotional aspect of manifest destiny. Speaking before the Harvard Alumni in July, 1852, he chided the new expansionist blustering spirit, referring to it as "that impersonal despotic sovereign who has lately set up his throne among us under the name of 'Young America'".[8] In March, Everett expressed his disapproval of this new mood to Dr. Boardman, who had presented an address, the "New Doctrine of Intervention." "I regret that our countrymen seem so prone to forget the fundamental principles of their prosperity," he wrote.

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[7]"Diary," 3 November 1852, EEP, vol. 171. Everett believed that Pierce represented pro-annexation forces. Forster Stearns, "Edward Everett," The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy, Samuel Flagg Bemis, ed (1928), 6:125-128; Weinberg, Manifest Destiny, p. 197; Norman Graebner, ed., Manifest Destiny (New York, 1968), pp. lx-lxii, 253-254.

[8]Edward Everett, "Festival of the Alumni of Harvard," 22 July 1852, Orations, 3:113.

> Intervention unsupported by military interference & so declared before hand would be simply ridiculous considered as a measure of National policy. If enforced by military interference, it would on the most favorable supposition as to its success, at once change our own government, first, into a strong, centralized, military Republic, & in due time & that not a long time into a military dictatorship.[9]

With these conditions in mind, Everett set forth his unique view of American expansion. The idea of a tripartate convention had deeper significance than the question of entangling alliances. It was a direct challenge to basic tenets of the Monroe Doctrine: the geographic proximity of Latin America to the United States was grounds to deny further European extension to that area, and those European powers having a foothold in this hemisphere were not considered equal partners in determining its destiny. What, in fact, the French and the British were suggesting, in the guise of a non-intervention alliance, was a recognition on the part of the United States to a French and British partnership in determining the affairs of Latin America.

The President, Everett wrote, had grave objections to the convention. Although the compact was equal in its terms, it was "very unequal in substance." The geographical position of Cuba in relation to the governments of France, England, and the United States spoke against equality. The United States did not deny to either country accumulation of additional land, but

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[9]Everett to Dr. Boardman, 19 March 1852, EEP, vol. 100.

Cuba was to the United States what some important islands in the Mediterranean were to Europe.[10] As to those who feared United States designs on Cuba, Everett noted that because of "domestic reasons," incorporating the island into the Union would be a "hazardous measure." The President considered the acquisition by force, "except in a just war with Spain,...a disgrace to the civilization of the age." Nevertheless, the President considered the "condition of Cuba mainly as an America question."[11]

The remaining portion of this letter expressed Everett's theory of "manifest destiny," or as he called it, the law of "National organic growth." No longer spokesman for New England's interests, representing the nation, Everett was most effective. While the territorial conditions of Europe had not changed since 1752, Everett began, "everything in America was provisional, incipient, and temporary, except, the law of progress, which is as organic and vital in the youth of States as of individual men."[12] With the end of the Seven Years' War, England had Canada, Spain had Louisiana. The American Revolution created a new power among the family of nations. By 1815, the ancient states of Europe were restored substantially to their former equilibrium,

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[10]Everett to Sartiges, 1 December 1852, State Department, Cuba.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid. Emphasis mine.

while America represented a new element in territorial arrangements. At the same time the revolutions in Latin America were marking the end of the Spanish empire in the new world. America had gained Louisiana and Florida. Thus sixty years after the close of the Seven Years War, both France and Spain had lost their imperial possessions on this continent, while the United States was, by the arts of peace and the healthful progress of things, rapidly enlarging her dimensions and consolidating her power. Then came the war with Mexico, which Everett pictured as a product of natural laws and historical factors. The new republics emerging out of the struggle with Spain, feeling the effects of race mixture or a want of training in liberal institutions, showed themselves incapable of self-government. As Mexico had revolted from Spain, the province of Texas had declared its right to separate from Mexico. Most Texans finally resolved the issue through annexation; an annexation, Everett added paranthetically, which in the annals of public law was natural and justifiable as any before it. The evidence thus presented clearly demonstrated the "undoubted operation of the law of our political existence."[13]

Everett then turned to Cuba and again qualified the nation's self-imposed restraint expressed initially. The same laws of civilization foretold of the eventual

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[13]Ibid.

demise of Spanish control of the island, Everett prophesized. While the president never questioned Spanish title to the island, could Spain, in fact, maintain her authority? Could Spain resist "this mighty current in the fortunes of the world?" Was it in the interest of Spain to cling to a possession which necessitated a garrison of twenty-five or thirty thousand troops, a powerful naval force and an annual expenditure of at least twelve millions of dollars? Could Spain not see that her own decline had been tied to the acquisition of colonies, and a rapid improvement had occurred since the loss of these holdings? Would she not benefit immeasurably, Everett advised, by the peaceful transfer of the island to the United States. She would lose little, for the ancient ties of language and taste would demand trade between Spain and Cuba.[14]

Just as the natural law of growth tore Cuba from Spain, likewise, it was foolish to think this convention could ultimately arrest the "law of American growth and progress," Everett wrote. No administration of this government, no matter how strong its position within the country, could afford the odium of having stipulated with the great powers of Europe, "that in no future time, under no change of circumstances, by no amicable arrangement with Spain, by no act of lawful war, (should that calamity unfortunately occur,) by no consent of the

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[14] Ibid.

inhabitants of the island, should they, like the possessions of Spain on the American continent, succeed in rendering themselves independent; in fine, by no overruling necessity of self-preservation should the United States ever make the acquisition of Cuba."[15] Finally, as if an afterthought, Everett returned to the original issue -- the status of Cuba. He once more offered his President's assurance and desire to maintain the status quo of the island.[16]

The importance of Everett's letter is clear. Not during the period between the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary would there be a clearer statement coming out of the State Department on the American position concerning hemispheric problems. Professor Albert Weinberg, in his study on manifest destiny, points out that it **not** only was the "first distinct assertion of our position as the leading power of the western world," but it also added to the validity of the idea of manifest destiny by giving this theory a new and scientific version with the law of growth.[17] Yet the document also shows clearly Everett's nationalist ideology. The ideas expressed in December, 1852 were

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Weinberg, Manifest Destiny, pp. 199-200.

similar to the theory of organic growth found in his earlier "Bunker Hill" address devoid of obvious sectional symbols. In his "Bunker Hill" oration, Everett set forth the organic growth theory in justification of existing political relationships, especially the Union. The Cuban letter extended this theory into the area of international relations.

In both cases, collective action was seen as natural. But an important distinction was made. The evolution of the "race" had achieved its apex in the constitutional relationships of 1787. Thus in the area of internal affairs, Everett sought to conserve the status quo. On the other hand, in the evolution of nations, the United States was still in its youthful stages. Thus while England and France had already achieved their natural place, the United States was still in a condition of growing. Finally, the Cuban letter continued, in the tradition of the earlier oration, to define the political collective as the most evolved stage of organic growth. In this way the letter served to stimulate the patriotic sense of the populace, which ultimately was Everett's deepest concern. As the Union was the vehicle of internal progress, the nation was the engine of international progress.

On February 16, 1853, Lord John Russell responded for the British government. The letter, weighed in the light of Everett's response, was certainly anticlimactic.

Besides questioning Everett's understanding of the law of nations, it merely reiterated England's historic role in the western hemisphere and restated the desire to preserve the present status of Cuba. Beyond that, the letter indicated that England would not push the issue any further. In fact, the dispatch was initially given to William Marcy, the new Secretary of State, who, in addition, was informed that there would be no further discussion on the issue.[18]

At the request of Secretary Marcy, Everett responded.[19] For the most part, he added little in his second letter, dated September 17, 1853. Although shorter in length than the first, Everett found space to criticize the double standard of England and France. Both were now engaged in expansion in India and Africa, and at the same time they invited the United States to disable herself "to the end of time from the acquisition in any way to this natural appendage to our Continent,...."[20] Nevertheless, he ended his letter to Russell with the same

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[18]"Answer to Lord John Russell to Mr. Everett's Letter on the Proposed Tripartite Treaty," Russell to Crampton, 16 February 1853, Crampton to Earl of Clarendon, 18 April 1853 (extract), State Department, Cuba.

[19]"Diary," 7 May 1853, EEP, vol. 172, Everett to W. L. Marcy, 7 May 1853 (Private and Confidential), 26 August 1853, 29 August 1853, EEP, vols. 96, 103.

[20]Everett to Right Honorable Lord John Russell, 17 September 1853, State Department, Cuba.

organic view of American growth expressed almost ten months before. Though denying any interest in Cuba, he would not admit that the United States had reached the limits of its growth. In a final passage, Everett linked the progress of the world to the expansion of American institutions. To deny the growth of the United States was to deny the growth of "representative government, religious equality, the trial by jury, the freedom of the press, and the other great attributes of our Anglo-Norman civilization..." institutions, which Everett called "very much the same thing," as the United States.[21]

The public response to Everett's first Cuban letter was quick and enthusiastic. The Democratic Review wrote of his letter, "the best paper that has ever appeared on the subject from the State Department." And Stephen Douglas, the leading spokesman for the "Young Americans" remarked, no other document ever received such universal sanction from the American people. Senator Stephen Mallory declared Everett's dispatch was the "most 'manifest destiny' document that ever emanated from the State Department." Senator John Mason, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, remarked, that the dispatch would meet with "universal approbation." Benjamin Rush, "was profuse in his compliments," and said "it was the first & only exposition of the Monroe doctrine (which he admitted was not named or alluded to in it) which had ever

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[21] Ibid.

been written."[22]

On December 7, 1852, the week following Everett's first letter a Mr. Asman of Springfield and a Mr. Davis of Greenfield approached him on the subject of running for the Senate.[23] Whether this invitation was connected to the Cuban letter is unclear, since the first public mention of the dispatch appeared in the Intelligencer on January 5, 1853, the day after the Senate passed a resolution calling for the Cuban correspondence.[24]

This fact, however, does not preclude the possibility that Asman and Davis, as well as others, had either seen or heard of the letter. The Senate resolution had indeed become a political issue; those opposed to Everett's advancement to the Senate objected to its passage.[25] Nevertheless, Senator Mason had his way. Although rumor appeared that this action was taken to enhance Everett's position Everett emphatically denied it.[26] By January 13, 1853, Robert Winthrop noted that the Secretary of

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[22]Democratic Review, 31 (November-December, 1852):443; Congressional Globe, 32nd Congress, 3rd Session, 1853, "Appendix, p. 273; Weinberg, Manifest Destiny, p. 200; "Diary," 20 December 1852, 9 January 1853, EEP, vols. 171,172.

[23]"Diary," 7 December 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

[24]Intelligencer, 5 January 1853; "Diary," 4 January 1843, 5 January 1853, EEP, vol. 172.

[25]"Diary," 25 December 1852, EEP, vol. 171. Though this view conforms to Everett's opinion it nevertheless makes the most sense. Men like Sumner were in opposition.

[26]Here too, it seems that the rumors had some validity and would be consistent with Everett's initial observation. "Diary," 29 December 1852, EEP, vol. 171.

State was "a man upon whom we can all agree."[27]

Everett had reached the zenith of his popularity during this period. An address before the Colonization Society on January 18, 1853, therefore, becomes even more significant. Coming after the Cuban letter, he was sure to reach a much larger audience than in the past. The publication of 100,000 copies is an indication that Everett thought his comments would do so and aid his quest for the Senate.[28] Yet his ideas on slavery were not motivated by purely political ends. The concepts expressed in this address were consistent with those expressed earlier. Though Everett privately wrote on the subject of colonization to John Pinney in 1851 and had written a short piece on Abdul Rahman published the same year, this oration must be considered his first major public statement on slavery since his letter on the subject when governor of Massachusetts in 1837.

As in his earlier letters to Pinney and Fillmore, Everett rejected the notion that the black race was inferior to the Anglo-American, or that the African could not achieve a high level of civilization. The continent of Africa contained a great diversity of people, from "the politic and warlike tribes upon the central plateau, to the broken down hordes on the slave coast,

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[27]Winthrop, Memoirs, p. 162, Everett to Winthrop, 20 January 1853, RCWP.

[28]"Diary," 4 February 1853, EEP, vol. 172.

and on the banks of the Congo, and the squalid, half human Hottentot." Did anybody think that the difference in Africa was "naturally greater than it is between the Laplander, the Gypsy, the Calmuc, and the proudest and brightest specimens of humanity in Europe or America? I think not," he said.[29]

It would be unjust to criticize the cultural achievements of the "colored population" under the present circumstances, he reiterated. Rather, the question should be what could be achieved under the most favorable circumstances. In view of the way American's had been treated in the past he said, "we ought to be a little cautious how we leap to the conclusions, that the free colored African race is necessarily in a condition of hopeless inferiority."[30] There was Paul Cuffee, a man of "Uncommon energy and force of character," who navigated his own ship manned by a colored crew to Liverpool; or Abdul Rahaman, the one-time blacksmith of Alabama now an African prince of Liberia. There was Beverly Williams who attended school with his son and turned out to be one of the best scholars. These men, Everett concluded, were proof of the capacity

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[29]Edward Everett, "The Colonization of Africa," 18 January 1853, Orations, 3:173-174; See also, p. 180.

[30]Ibid., pp. 178-179.

of the colored race for every kind of intellectual improvement.[31]

Turning once again in defense of the colonization scheme, Everett presented the imageof God, who for inscrutable reasons made it impossible for men of the Anglo-Saxon race to conquer the interior of Africa. But to compensate for this biological disability, the free black descendants of those torn from Africa, though perhaps not educated properly, were nevertheless born "sharing in the main blessings and the lights of our common Christian civilization." These free blacks were to be the medium of conveying these blessings to the land of their fathers.[32]

On one level, Everett's views were most radical and advanced for the age. Few men recognized the equality of the races, and fewer, if any, of a political persuasion dared voice this publicly.[33] Yet a closer look at this oration, especially when compared with his letters to Pinkney and Fillmore, suggests that Everett had modified his views in light of his political position. Most obvious is the omission of any discussion of slavery. Although any topic dealing with the black race had

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[31] Ibid., pp. 182-183.

[32] Ibid., pp. 176-178.

[33] Everett's concept of equality was modified during the remaining years of his life.

implications concerning slavery, Everett's concentration on the condition of free blacks seemed consciously motivated.

By focusing on the free black man rather than the slave, the idea of "equality" became somewhat more acceptable. Politically, it could "satisfy" most factions. Though Southerners and other pro-slavery elements might rebel against the notion of "equality," colonization, and discussion centering on free blacks left the peculiar institution secure. Northern elements of an antislave persuasion could surely endorse Everett's anti-racist remarks. And finally, conservative elements who opposed the introduction of slavery into politics could applaud the shift in emphasis from abolition to colonization. The focus on colonization provided a rational counterweight to the emotional and irrational concept of abolitionism. Energy directed toward the goal of African colonization would aid the growth of civilization abroad and pacify sectional antagonism at home.

If on one level, Everett's remarks denied a racist bias; on another level his racism was obvious. To deny the plight of the black slave in order to preserve a white union belied equality. In addition, there was ample evidence to indicate that Everett's endorsement of "equality" was never completely wholehearted. Ten months after his African oration, he wrote to C. G. Baylor, of the Baltimore Times, "I admit the impossibility of social

equality or equality of political rights on any thing but a relation of superior & inferior, when the two races are brought into contact; but this does not seem necessarily to imply ownership."[34] Furthermore, as was apparent in his thought of 1851, Everett's idea of colonization reflected a "racist" bias. And here we must return to Everett's understanding of race, which was cultural rather than biological (though the two could merge, as in this case). The image of freed blacks carrying the fruits of the most advanced race back to Africa was clearly a reflection of Everett's racial and national chauvinism. Slavery would allow the Anglo-American culture to reach the heart of Africa; organic growth would finally take place on that continent.

Although the Whig party had been defeated in November, 1852 in its bid to maintain the presidency, it was successful in Massachusetts. On February 26, 1853, Everett prepared a letter of resignation, an event somewhat overshadowed by action taken earlier in the month by the legislature of Massachusetts, which elected him United States Senator. On March 4, 1853, Everett assumed his position and was appointed to the Committee on Foreign Relations as well as to the Committee on

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[34]Everett to C. G. Baylor, 19 October 1853, EEP, vol. 103.

Territories.[35]

Everett's introduction to the Senate was initially disappointing. "There is no disposition on the part of the Senate to do business," he recorded in his diary early in March. "Many of the members are light -- & frivolous persons without feeling of responsibility: -- more are absorbed in President making & general electioneering. The public is the last thing thought of."[36] In March, Everett delivered a two-hour speech on Central America. He indicated the major purpose was to allay any apprehensions on the part of the English respecting recent events in Cuba and, at the same time, to "administer a gentle rebuke to Judge Douglas' bellicose and annexing propensities."[37] While hoping to convey a sense of patriotism and national pride in his Cuban letters, Everett never consciously desired to perpetuate that land-grasping ideal which the Douglas faction of the Democratic party professed. Further, he was always committed to maintaining the best relations with England. At the end of April, he wrote to Lord Aberdeen explaining the "young American" phenomenon. It was true that Douglas

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[35]George Boutwell, Reminescences of Sixty Years in Public Affairs (New York, 1902) 1:233; Frothingham, Everett, p. 340; "Diary," 26 February 1853, EEP, vol. 172. The House voted on February 2, 1853, the Senate on February 3, 1853. Congressional Globe, 1853-1854, p. 27.

[36]"Diary," 14 March 1853, EEP, vol. 172.

[37]"Diary," 21 March 1853, EEP, vol. 172.

had great popularity among members of the Democratic party, but recent indications in domestic politics and Douglas' visit to Europe, Everett hoped, would have a salutary influence on him. To Speaker Denison, he noted, that while the new minister to Spain belongs to what is called "young America," which would indicate that significant efforts to gain Cuba would be made, both Secretary of State Marcy and the President belonged to the conservative wing of the Democratic party, and "being in power will (I think) be disposed to keep out of hot water."[38]

As Senator, Everett once again became immersed in the sectional crisis. Because the previous five months had proven so successful, the concept of organic nationalism being well received, Everett sought to identify all his political values with this theme. In his address entitled "Stability and Progress," given on July 4, 1853, Everett sought to rejuvenate and inculcate the spirit of conservatism, which was being characterized as "old fogyism," by pointing to its historic connection with the principle of organic growth. These "old fogies," Everett said, did not err in their attachment to or reverence of the past, but only in pushing this sound principle to extremes. The principle was "not merely an innate feeling of the human

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[38]Everett to Aberdeen, 26 April 1853, EEP, vol. 102, Everett to Denison, 25 April 1853, EEP, vol. 102.

heart, but a direct logical consequence of the physical and spiritual constitution which our Creator has given us."[39]

What Everett was, in fact, asking of his listeners was not blind adherence to those institutions of the present because they were born of the past, but a sense of history which could only be gained through the identification of those things now present with those of the past -- things which perhaps have been constant since the beginning of man. Here was a philosophical concept of the unity of life, the historical mind. There were those, Everett said that day, who thought that because a thing had existed for a considerable length of time it was an abuse; that, "to change is, as matter of course, to reform; -- to innovate, of necessity, an improvement." This was the cry of "Young America." Here too, as with the "old fogies," the error was one of exaggeration only. "He needs the curb occasionally, as we old ones, perhaps still more frequently need the spur."

If the principle of stability was natural, so too was the principle of progress. The history of the race, and a comparison of the condition of the contemporary world with that of the past, proved that the principle of progress was as deeply seated in America's nature as the principle of conservatism. The true "practical wisdom

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[39]Edward Everett, "Stability and Progress," 4 July 1853, Orations, 3:226-227.

and high national policy reside in the due mixture and joint action of the two," he said. This was the meaning of the American Revolution, which at once was "the most instructive and glorious illustration of the union of the two great principles of STABILITY and PROGRESS.... The story of the men of '76 was the story of men who not only looked to the future, but explored the history of the past.[40] The application of this principle of duality to our lives, concluded Everett, was clearly necessary in 1853 as it was in 1776. While there was no longer a foreign yoke to throw off, he suggested, our duty was to carry and to extend the inheritance of the fathers beyond the Missouri, "beyond the Sierra Nevade, in time, around the circuit of the Antilles; perhaps to the archipelagoes of the Central Pacific." "The pioneers are on the way; who can tell how far and how fast they will travel?"[41]

Everett's duality was in essence the paradox which all societies had to resolve. To have progress required stability, yet progress meant change and therefore denied stability. Furthermore, stability could only be achieved as long as the signs of progress appeared. In Everett's attempt to resolve this paradox, two points are clear. First, Everett had completely succumbed to the new

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[40] Ibid., pp. 225-227-230.

[41] Ibid., p. 230.

symbology of progress which Leo Marx so brilliantly analyzed in his study, The Machine in the Garden. The almost complete identification of "progress" with technological achievements was obvious. Secondly, Everett bound up technological progress with the existing political system. To have continued "progress," Everett suggested, required a commitment to preserving the Union. Those who sought to uproot the institutions of stability were denying the principle of progress.

In addition, Everett's concept of progress was defined within the framework of growth rather than change. Progress, for him, was the extension of that which is, or, in other words, progress was the extension of stability. But if Everett was calling for a sense of history, his own sense of history was trapped in the present condition. For in his ideas appeared the mood of self-satisfaction which Jose Ortega y Gasset recognized almost one hundred years later in his work, The Revolt of the Masses. History, as Ortega said, requires a sense of change and an ideal toward which we must move.[42] This was lacking in Everett's thought. This is not to say that Everett was completely satisfied with the historic moment, but his dissatisfaction was directed at those who

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[42]Leo Marx, "The Machine," The Machine in the Garden, pp. 145-227; Jose Ortega y Gasset, The Revolt of the Masses (New York, 1932), im passim.

wished to change the present institutional relationships. His dissatisfaction was directed at those who were dissatisfied.

The stable society which Everett required was not realized. On Wednesday, January 4, 1854, Senator Douglas of Illinois, informed the Senate that the Committee on Territories had prepared a bill for the organization of the territory of Nebraska.[43] From the beginning, Everett opposed the measure. On January 9, he wrote William Trescot that it appeared likely now that the whole subject of slavery was going to be aired publicly. If only the friends of the measure would adopt the House version passed last winter, the question of slavery could be avoided.[44] As it stood he could not vote for the bill and informed his southern friends of his action. Everett hoped the problem could be resolved without the emotionalism engendered by the slave issue and advised, along with other representatives of Massachusetts, that the state legislature withhold any action expressing their opposition to the act.[45] Yet his predicament was

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[43] Congressional Globe, 1854, p. 115.

[44] Everett to Trescot, 9 January 1854, EEP, vol. 103.

[45] "Diary," 18 January 1854, 27 January 1854, EEP, vol. 173. Everett was referring here to the popularity he had achieved while Secretary of State. News circulated at that time that he might be considered for the presidency, but Everett denied this was on his mind. Nevertheless, he did indicate that such an event was most improbable. A New Englander not of the Democratic Party, he wrote,

clear, and he mourned the fact that he could find no way of resolving it without losing some of his present popularity. In a letter to Trescot, written on January 30, 1854, Everett said that if he would separate "himself from the mass of our friends (which I cannot do conscientiously) I could not carry with me a corporal's guard.[46] And to J. C. Spencer, he bemoaned the inevitable loss of "all the little favor I seemed to possess at the South: but I see no alternative." As he saw it, "nothing was more certain than that no whig -- of any name or shade, -- will be in favor of the abrogation of the Missouri Compromise." It "will be impossible for me on the impending question of Nebraska to concur with my

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had as much chance of becoming a presidential candidate as of "making oak planks out of pine saw-dust." Only if a party realignment occurred, with new Parties based on national issues, could he be successful. Perhaps it was this latter thought which prompted him to send this letter to James Buchanan. Everett wrote in response to Buchanan's favorable comments on Everett's Cuban letter. "There is much to rejoice about," Everett wrote, that so many of the old issues which separated them in the years of the Panama Mission question are now obsolete, and that on the most vital questions of foreign & domestic policy there was so general an accord. Yet Everett pointed out, in terms of his own political future, that much depended on "the shape, which the present choatic & fermenting elements may assume." Everett to Buchanan, 31 October 1853, Everett to Baylor, 19 October 1853, Everett to S. Southworth, 29 September 1853, EEP, vol. 103.

[46]Everett to Trescot, 30 January 1854, Everett to J. C. Spencer, 4 February 1854, EEP, vol. 103.

Southern friends," he concluded.[47]

On January 30, 1854, Senator Douglas opened debate on what Everett called the "wretched Nebraska bill." One week later, Everett reluctantly took the floor to speak to the proposal only to discover that Douglas had offered a substitute amendment. Everett, in light of this new situation, asked for a day's delay. That night he entered in his diary, "My preparation is very inadequate & it happens unfortunately, that I am called to speak on the most important subject & the most critical occasion of my life with less premeditation than almost ever before."[48] On February 8, 1854, he presented his position on the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

The speech reflected Everett's predilection and personality. It was legalistic, logical, rational, and, for the most part, devoid of emotion. He did not raise the question of slavery, nor the power relationship between North and South -- except to deny that the South had been treated as an inferior during the past years. He sought to maintain his nationalist posture while exploding the theory expressed by Douglas.

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[47]Everett to Trescot, 30 January 1854, EEP, vol. 104.

[48]Congressional Globe, 33 Congress, 1st Session, Part I, 7 February, 1854, p. 353; "Diary," 7 February 1854, EEP, vol. 174.

It appeared to him, that Douglas' whole case for adopting the Kansas-Nebraska bill was based on the assumption that the Compromise of 1850 expressed the "principle" of congressional non-intervention in matters of the adoption or non-adoption of slavery in territories. Thus, the Missouri Compromise, which denied to the territory of Kansas-Nebraska the presence of slavery, was no longer operative. This interpretation Everett rejected emphatically. Nowhere, Everett noted, could he find in the territorial bills enacted in 1850 any reference to a principle of non-intervention. In fact, the legislation of 1850 did not undertake to decide this question of intervention at all, and thus no principle was set forth as suggested by Douglas. Appealing to the memory of Daniel Webster, Everett pointed to his famous 7th of March speech which, he reminded Douglas, clearly denoted that the popular sovereignty provisions of the Compromise of 1850, specifically and unequivocally dealt with the territories of Utah and New Mexico, "and <u>of them alone</u>." At that time, Everett continued, Webster, upon voicing his support for the Compromise of 1850, commended to the attention of the Senate the fact that every single foot of land in the country, for slavery or non-slavery, "is fixed by some irrepealable law." Thus, the principle which Douglas referred to did not and never did exist. The attempt to extend the decisions of 1850, which were applicable to Utah and New Mexico

alone, to the territories specifically dealt with thirty years ago, was to distort the nature of the bills enacted in 1850.

One more point had to be made, not against the Kansas-Nebraska bill, but in defense of Everett's moderation and nationalism. Never, he recalled, had he sought to kindle the flames of antagonism between the sections over the issue of slavery. His had been an effort of moderation, conciliation, and harmony. He knew and believed that nothing said as harsh epithets or denunciations could ever convince men to change their views on the subject of slavery. While he was at heart, mind, and soul, a product of that part of the country where he was born and educated, he could not and would never deny to his fellow citizens in the South those legal and constitutional rights to which they were entitled. Nor would he ever treat them without tenderness. "I believe them to be as good Christians, as good patriots, as good men, as we are; and I claim what we, in our turn, are as good as they."

Once more came the plea for unity and the need to pacify those outbursts of passionate sectional antagonism. The great evil of slavery, he repeated, was the product of three and a half centuries and could not be eliminated in a day, or a year, or a few years. The inexorable hand of Providence showed signs of working out this blight. The movement back to Africa, which was already

beginning, promised not only the end of the institution but -- and he had no doubt on this score -- "that to His own good time the Ruler of all will vindicate the most glorious of His prerogatives, 'From seeming evil still educing good!'"[49]

Little did Everett know that this would be his last major address before the United States Senate. The initial reaction to his address was pleasing. Charles Sumner crossed the Senate immediately following the conclusion, thanked and congratulated him, and remarked, "you have dealt the monster a blow between the eyes."[50] Even Everett, though recognizing that this address had done little to enhance his political fortunes, informed Winthrop that he had been on safe ground. To Trescot, he wrote, that both North and South, with the exception of fervid antislavery men, were satisfied and generally contented.[51] In addition to this address, Everett offered the Senate petitions from 1400 clergymen of Worcester and Webster and a resolution of the Massachusetts legislature all remonstrating against passage.[52]

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[49]Congressional Globe, 1854, "Appendix, pp. 158-163.

[50]Frothingham, Everett, p. 350; See also, Everett to Sumner, 16 June 1856, EEP, vol. 106.

[51]Everett to Winthrop, 2 February 1854, RCWP, Everett to Trescot, 13 February 1854, EEP, vol. 103.

[52]Congressional Globe, 1854, 20 February 1854, p. 446, 24 February 1854, p. 473, 27 February 1854, pp. 485-493, "Diary," 13 February 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

Debate on the bill continued through February. On the third of March, after speeches from a group including Bell of Tennessee, Fessenden of Maine, Houston of Texas, and a four hour address by Douglas, the latter took the floor at five o'clock in the morning and called for a vote on the measure. Thirty-seven were in favor; fourteen opposed.[53] Fourteen men had not voted and among the list, which was published that Sunday in the New York Herald, appeared the name Edward Everett of Massachusetts.

Everett's own account of the incident indicates that he had attended the session all day, but by 3:30 in the morning finding himself ill and exhausted, went home.[54] Whether he was really sick is difficult to say; we only have Everett's testimony. But his diary, from the day before the vote until he retired from the Senate, conveys the feeling of great fatigue and exhaustion.[55]

On March 7, Everett took the floor once again in an attempt to have his vote of "nay" recorded on the Senatorial roll. He wished to make his opposition to the bill clear. This, he said, was already public information to his brother Senators, having voted against the bill

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[53]"Diary," 3 March 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

[54]Ibid.

[55]"Diary," 5 March 1854, 6 March 1854, 8 March 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

in committee, having voted against the test amendment offered by Senator Douglas, and by his speech offered on the 8th of February.[56] After a brief discussion of the question, which included the discovery that such an event only happened once in the past, and Senator Dodge's (of Iowa) friendly objection, Everett withdrew his motion.[57]

Criticism was now directed at Everett not only for his non-vote, but at the general tenor of his approach to the problem. Surely the Senator from Massachusetts, the home of the FreeSoil and abolitionist movements, was expected to make a strong statement. To the Reverend R. M. Devens, Everett offered a justification for taking what he thought was the proper tone to defeat the bill. He might not have spoken for a portion of the people of the state, "but I am greatly mistaken if a majority are in favor of introducing fervid antislavery appeals into Congress? Do they promote the desired effect? If this bill was to be defeated, it was by convincing the judgments of fair men at the South, and those at the North inclined to go with the South. What kind of speech is calculated to produce this effect?"[58]

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[56]Congressional Globe, 1854, 7 March 1854, p. 550.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Everett to Rev. R. M. Devens, 13 March 1854, EEP, vol. 103.

Nor was Everett alone in defending his posture on this affair. The Northampton Hampshire Gazette, which had not originally endorsed Everett for the Senate, argued on March 28 that Everett's actions seemed sufficient to "satisfy any reasonable person" and that he opposed the bill "in all reasonable ways."[59] But these were not "reasonable" times. The absence of any moral justification for the maintenance of slavery, the level of frustration which the Kansas-Nebraska Bill engendered, the strong sectional feeling opposing positions reflected, was not conducive to Everett's "reasonable ways." While his nationalist posture had proven successful as Secretary of State he failed to grasp the significance of his new political position as Senator of Massachusetts. While his experience during the previous nine years had generated strong nationalist sentiments in him, by 1854 the nationalist's view was not popular in the states. Everett's political status, therefore, suffered.

Everett tried to counter these attacks, submitting memorials from various segments of the population in opposition to the Act.[60] In mid-March, he met with Lawrence and Ticknor and informed them that if the disaffection and opposition to his cause continued, he would have to resign his seat.[61] Both suggested

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[59] Hampshire Gazette, 28 February 1854.

[60] Congressional Globe, 1854, pp. 607, 618-619, 773, 834, 856, 875.

[61] "Diary," 20 March 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

delay. By the end of April, however, Everett's health, the state of his family's health, and a sense of despair with the general state of affairs brought him to the conclusion that he could no longer remain in the Senate.[62] While his closest friend Winthrop urged him to stay if his health would permit, even he confided that the Senator was looking "wretchedly." But Everett had made up his mind. Perhaps the final judgment of his doctor was sufficient to force immediate withdrawal.[63] On May 12, 1854, Everett sent Governor Elihu B. Washburn a private letter informing him of his intention to retire on the 1st of June.[64] In two letters to Winthrop, he wrote of his decision. Both reflected not only his personal hurt, but his positive judgment concerning his role.

> There is no cause left for men of moderate counsels between the extremists at both ends of the scale.
>
> I of course consider my resignation as the end of my political career. I am quite content that it should close at this time, and though the <u>finale</u> is not particularly brilliant, I hope that the candid who survey the whole will allow me the praise of having tried to do my duty.[65]

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[62]"Diary," 12 April 1854, 3 May 1854, EEP, vol. 173, Everett to Holland, 25 April 1854, EEP, vol. 103.

[63]Winthrop, <u>Memoirs</u>, p. 166, "Diary," 3 May 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

[64]"Diary," 12 May 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

[65]Everett to Winthrop, 12 May 1854, 13 May 1854, RCWP.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEATH OF AN AGE

The bitter experience of Everett's short tenure as Senator, and the heightened tensions produced by the Kansas-Nebraska bill deeply affected Everett's views of American life and his nationalism. Especially noticeable, and directly related to his own political failure, was his growing hostility toward northern antislavery elements. If in the past, Everett often distinguished between honest and corrupt elements in the antislavery movement, the events of 1854, he believed, showed the true motives of these individuals.[1]

Stories of hypocrisy or the inconsistency between actions and rhetoric often were recorded in his diary. There was a story, for example, about John P. Hale, conveyed by Mr. Chase, Chairman of the Lecture Committee of the Mercantile Library, who recalled that some years ago, in discussion with Hale, "he joked about 'our colored brethren' in such a way, as convinced him that he was

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[1]"Diary," 9 September 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

playing a game; as indeed sufficiently apparent from his public course." Everett believed that those who supported freesoil often identified with the "free-love" concept. This further diminished their arguments for freesoil.[2] Few of the present champions of abolition, he wrote, were in the forefront when the cause was unpopular. Those who spoke for the slave in public in private usually reflected their true feelings. "They care nothing about slavery or the colored races;" he wrote on January 24, 1856. "Anti-Slavery agitation with them is purely a matter of political manoeuvre."[3] The theme of political motivation dominated his writings and was often reinforced by the observation, that no abolitionist ever married a member of the "colored race."[4]

The same kind of moral hypocrisy was attributed to the newly formed Republican Party. "The 'Republican' Convention meets today at Philadelphia; probably a body as much influenced by motives of calculation and personal interest, cloaked with presences of extraordinary zeal

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[2]"Diary," 31 July 1855, 20 September 1855, EEP, vol. 174.

[3]In this passage Everett was referring, in particular, to people like, Sumner, Henry Ward, Beecher, John P. Hale, Seward and Greely, all of whom were being honored in an engraving entitled the "Seven Champions of Freedom." "Diary," 10 May 1856, 24 January 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

[4]"Diary," 26 October 1856, EEP, vol. 175; See also, "Diary," 13 November 1857, 21 September 1856, 22 September 1855, 24 July 1856, EEP, vols. 174, 175, 176.

for liberty as any that ever assembled in the U.S.," he wrote on June 17, 1856.[5] And in July, he wrote, "Great troubles in Kansas of which the solution really is that the leaders of the 'Republican' party are determined that no pacification should be had as that would put an end to their organization."[6]

But Everett's attack on freesoil motives mirrored a deeper and more significant fact. The relationship between freesoil and freelove, Everett believed, reflected the general decline in American values, a product of the "war against conservatism."[7] "These disorderly and revolutionary movements date from the formation of the Free-soil party;" he wrote in December, 1857, "which first began to teach a 'higher law' contempt for courts, for precedents, for age; and to reduce everything to the bases of a vague rotund equity; which to the common mind reduces itself to the right to doing what you please."[8]

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[5]"Diary," 17 June 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

[6]Everett to Holland, 6 April 1857, EEP, vol. 107; See also, Everett to Holland, 11 November 1856, 6 April, 1857, EEP, vols. 106, 107, "Diary," 25 July 1857, 26 May 1859, 2 November 1858, EEP, vols. 176, 177, 178.

[7]"Diary," 20 September 1855, EEP, vol. 174.

[8]"Diary," 5 December 1857, EEP, vol. 176; See also, attack on Fourier's system. Everett said, "It ignores the great fact of our nature -- the need of coercive authority to constitute or govern the institution." "Diary," 27 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175. Everett also noted the decline of "rational amusements." "Diary," 20 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

While he never doubted the superiority of America's political system he now had some reservations. He agreed with his English friend Henry Holland who recognized the undesirable state of things taking place in America. "Our frequent elections keep us in hot water all the time; universal suffrage throws bad men to the top of affairs; and the immensely laborious and complicated system of our politics wearies & disgusts the sentient, the physically infirm, the mentally and morally pacific."[9] The country had split into extreme positions and moderate men no longer could find a place.

If there were one institution which seemed to reflect the end of an era and the transformation of American society, it was the church. This was particularly meaningful to Everett, for Everett's had played a significant role in this institution. Everett's life, indeed, had encompassed the birth, growth and transformation of the Unitarian Church. While he had witnessed and decried the movement of the church along political lines in the past, the cultural meaning was not clear to him until the political situation became more unsettled.

Church attendance he knew had continually declined during the years preceeding 1854, but his concern was heightened in the years following the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Typical was this recording in his diary. The

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[9]Everett to Holland, 25 June 1854, EEP, vol. 103; See also, "Diary," 31 May 1856, 25 June 1856, 7 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

"Church dismally thin in the P.M. I cannot but think that some great revolution in public opinion or sentiment must take place or the public ministrations of religion will cease to exist for the active efficient masses of society. They are now given up to the Old -- to women, to children."[10] What alarmed him more than the decline in interest, was the increase in popularity of those churches where issues of the day, rather than spiritual ones, were considered. Rather than cultivate those qualities of a "mild and loving temper," rather than chasten, tranquilize, purify and reduce the angry passions of the moment, the pulpit was the stage upon which a "neologistic" school of ministers were spewing their doctrines. They had plunged themselves and their parishes into the strife of parties.[11]

In the midst of what Everett saw as a growing spirit of atheism and pantheism, a spirit which had already found its way into the Unitarian Church in the guise of this neologism, the clergy concerned itself with slavery, which did not exist within hundreds of miles of Massachusetts. "It is a curious & somewhat melancholy fact that our clergy can dwell on scarce any other sin,"

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[10]"Diary," 15 April 1860, EEP, vol. 179; See also, "Diary," 4 June 1854, 29 July 1855, 6 June 1858, EEP, vols. 173, 174, 177.

[11]"Diary," 4 June 1854, 29 July 1855, EEP, vols. 173, 175, Everett to E. S. Gannett, 2 July 1856, EEP, vol. 106.

he wrote in April, 1855. Even the conservative clergy, who knew better, could not escape the "poisonous tongues" of these agitators. "They are drawn, in spite of their better judgment, to give some countenance to the agitation, which in their hearts they do not approve.[12]

Even preachers whom Everett might not include among those he typed "youthful, ignorant, dull, prejudiced & malignant," men like Emerson and Parker, came under his critical eye. While young Hale preached with seriousness and earnestness, Emerson, upon an invitation from Theodore Parker, before the 28th Congregational Society, spoke on the "Natural Aristocracy." "That may be called religious instruction," Everett sardonically recorded. "That is what poor suffering, bereaved, heartbroken men and women want: that is the kind of teaching desirable for young men hurrying into life to purify their characters and enable them to govern their passions: -- that is what old men & women want who are just dropping into the grave. The 'Natural Aristocracy'"![13]

Everett's hostility to this new school of preachers, however, was not totally a reaction to the politicalization of the church. For him the church was the dispenser of those values which had produced the American character.

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[12]"Diary," 5 April 1855, 19 July 1857, 26 June 1859, EEP, vols. 174, 177, 178.

[13]"Diary," 27 February, 1859, 22 August 1858, EEP, vols. 177, 178.

The changed mood of the country and its adoption of a different style was seen by Everett as a "war against conservatism." The Kansas-Nebraska vote not only brought an end to his political career, but to conservative influence in America as well. To President Fillmore, he wrote, "...I do not err in saying that conservatism in all its forms, is prostrate."[14]

Everett believed that attacks on him were due to his defence and propagation of conservative principles. When he had spoken on the Kansas-Nebraska issue in 1854, it was before public excitement had been fully aroused. His address, he recalled, was generally accepted by most, with the exception of extremists. But as the tone of public sentiment heightened, certain men felt it proper to denounce it as "unsound."[15] The hostility directed toward him by men like Greeley was related, Everett believed, to his moderate posture. Once Greeley found that Southerners could accept the principles of his Kansas-Nebraska speech, once Greeley recognized that

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[14]Everett to Fillmore, 9 July 1856, EEP, vol. 105; See also, Everett to Cushing, 11 October 1855, Everett to Trescott, 6 June 1855, Everett to Horance Maynard, 3 October 1857, Everett to Buchanan, 8 December 1856, EEP, vols. 104, 106, 108.

[15]Everett to Dr. John Bowon, 25 August 1854 (Private); EEP, vol. 103; See also, Everett to Henry Randall, 6 August 1856, EEP, vol. 106.

conciliation could be achieved without sacrificing northern principles, "he sprung at me like a bloodhound: Conciliation on any terms even northern terms, being just what he does not want." Everett now defined his whole life as a force toward conciliation, "the premise of our present system." "The ground on which I have endeavored to stand is well known," he wrote Horace Maynard, "it is that of conciliation in the spirit of the Constitution."[16]

As the months passed, Everett came to see himself as the symbol of moderation and conciliation. Attacks directed at him were indicative of the decline in moderate values. In June, 1856, he wrote to Mrs. Charles Eames, "in short we have reached the point when moderate counsels I have always pursued are detested by both parties." And to his son-in-law, W. H. A. Wise, he said, "Like all men that pursue moderate Councils, I have had the misfortune to become the object of attacks on both sides." This fate, Everett noted, was the fate historically of moderate men, as pointed out by Thucydides two thousand years ago.[17]

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[16]"Diary," 8 January 1855, EEP, vol. 174, Everett to Maynard, 3 October 1857, EEP, vol. 106; See also, Everett to Randall, 6 October 1856, Everett to Richard Yeadon, 6 June 1857, Everett to H. A. Wise, USN, 22 December 1856, EEP, vol. 106, 107.

[17]Everett to Mrs. Charles Eames, 21 June 1856, Everett to Wise, 22 December 1856, EEP, vols. 106, 107; See also, Everett to Mrs. W. F. Ritchie, 26 June 1856, EEP, vol. 106.

Criticism from such notables as Harriet Martineau, the historian Richard Hildreth, and the Beecher family, only convinced Everett that his was an historic trial and ordeal. If need be, he would stand alone against those who sought disunion and uphold certain values as did Socrates and Plato.[18]

> The events I fear will show sooner or later the fallacy of any theory which assumes that Man in the U.S. is a very different being from what he was, when Socrates was put to death as a corrupter of youth, when the best patriots of Rome were given up to the dagger of the assassin, -- when the Republics of Italy were engaged in rendering each others vitals for generations, & when France lay bleeding at the feet of Danton & Robespierre.[19]

Perhaps his letter to J. R. Thompson in September, 1857, best reflects Everett's belief that he personified the nation's or history's highest ideals. "I do not of course like to be abused:-" he wrote, "I suppose no one does. But I have the consolation that none of those who malign me have the excuse of personal provocation; and that they hate me no worse than they do the Constitution & the Union,- the Christian Church and the Scriptures, and nearly every institution of Civilized Society as it

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[18]"Diary," 20 November 1858, 2 October 1854, 14 September 1855, 22 January 1859, EEP, vols. 173, 174, 177, 178, Everett to William Everett, 31 October 1859, EEP, vol. 111.

[19]Everett to The Editor of the Newark Advertiser, 17 June 1856, EEP, vol. 106. See also, Everett to Peter Harvey, 11 December 1858, EEP, vol. 109, Edward Everett, "Rufus Choate," 23 July 1859, Orations, 4:178-185.

exists among us."[20]

In some darker moments, he saw these attacks as evidence of movement towards "a true reign of terror" which was preparing the way for "visits by committees, extorted subscriptions, denunciations by legislative bodies & at length mobs & every other form of popular violence & revolutionary convulsions."[21] Seven months later, reviewing George Bancroft's new volume on the History of the United States, Everett saw the course of loyalists in a different light. In his diary, he wrote, "I think he hardly does justice to the Loyalists. Many of whom were honest men, who differed in political opinion from the majority."[22]

The Kansas-Nebraska Act, in Everett's eyes, not only caused the demise of conservative influence in America, but it rang in the final act for the Whig party. "The repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 was the coup de Grace [sic] to the Whig organization in Massachusetts." It was the general insensitivity to Webster shown by men of the South, and his eventual death which further weakened the organization.[23]

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[20]Everett to J.R. Thompson, 12 September 1857, Anthony Collection, New York Public Library (hereafter cited as AC).

[21]Ibid.

[22]"Diary," 11 June 1858, EEP, vol. 177.

[23]Everett to J.A. Hamilton, 10 November 1855, Edward Everett Misc. Papers, New York Public Library

If some, like James Hamilton of New York, thought to reorganize the Whig party on a national level, Everett was pessimistic about this course. The whole thrust of reorganization depended upon the course to be followed by the Whigs in the South. Everett believed Southern Whigs showed little desire to aid the course of Northern conservatives, and seemed to take pleasure in displaying their adherence to the Southern view of the question. The specific motion to repeal the Missouri Compromise came from Clay's successor, Archibald Dixon, a Kentucky Whig. When the bill was being contemplated he recalled that he told his Southern friends that they must alter its title to read, "An act to cut the throat of every conservative whig at the North and give fresh and irresistable impulse to Antislavery agitation." Nevertheless, with the exception of one or two, all felt obliged to vote for the measure.[24]

It was the obvious that no Whig could win the coming presidential election, especially against a field that would contain three different parties.

(hereafter cited as EEMP). This position concerning the death of the Whig party was also expressed in letters; Everett to George Badger, 27 June 1854, Everett to Treseot, 20 October 1854, Everett to Fillmore, 10 November 1854, EEP, vols. 103, 104.

[24]Everett to Hamilton, 17 December 1855, EEMP, Everett to James B. Clay, 7 May 1856, EEP, vol. 106; See also, Everett to Fillmore, 10 November 1854, Everett to Hamilton, 5 January 1856, EEP, vols. 104, 105, Everett to Hamilton, 10 November 1855, EEMP.

There could be no doubt, he wrote, that both the Democrats and Republican parties would field a candidate. The former would probably support Peirce and the latter Seward. The newly organized Know Nothing Party would most likely offer a candidate as well. This party, he thought, would nominate Fillmore. Thus it appeared to him, a fourth candidate had no chance. As he had previously noted, "the 'Union Whig' party at the South is more completely disorganized than at the North." Thus it appeared that "if the Know Nothings will nominate Mr. Fillmore, the Whigs in Mass would support him with great cordiality." Furthermore, he cautioned against a nomination of Fillmore by the New York Whigs in January, one month before the Know Nothing convention. This would do more damage to Fillmore's chances than good, as certain free-soil members of the Know Nothing Party would use this against his nomination.[25] "The greatest danger to be apprehended," he warned Hamilton, is "that the events of the impending session may be such, as to invigorate the Republican, which I regard as a disunion party;- & split the K.N. into a northern & southern wing - & break up what little nationality we have left."[26]

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[25]Everett to Hamilton, 3 December 1855, EEMP, Everett to Winthrop, 31 December, RCWP.

[26]Everett to Hamilton, 3 December 1855, EEMP. Emphasis mine.

Everett's eventual approval of the Know Nothing Party reflected his concern over the spirit of disunity in the country, and the decline of national feeling and of national institutions, rather than an endorsement of the party's nativism. In fact, Everett had a favorable opinion of immigration. Early in his career, as editor of the North American Review, he pointed to the possible benefits German immigration could have upon the elimination of slave labor. What made abolition so difficult, he wrote, was the question of color. "You can do nothing with the man when you have emancipated him; he is an inferior marked person, with whom you will not associate nor amalgamate; and who in large numbers, bound together by his strong physical bond of community, may prove no agreeable member of your body politic."[27] If the new immigration could replace the African in the field, the obstacle of color would be eliminated, along with the physical inferiority that commonly goes with it. American slavery would be similar to English villeinage and ancient servitude as it exists all over the world. "The redemptioner would grow to be an enlightened citizen in a few ages."[28]

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[27]Edward Everett, "German Emigration," North American Review 11 (July, 1820):16-17.

[28]Ibid.

By the 1830's, however, it was not German Protestants, but rather Irish Catholics who became the focus of the anti-immigration mood. These newly arrived Europeans, for the most part, were going north to Boston, to the factories, the home of New England Calvinism and American Protestantism. Throughout the 1830's and 1840's Everett remained overtly sympathetic to this movement. Perhaps it was, as he himself remarked, his own experiences in foreign soil, or the terrible time he had with the ocean journey, that endowed him with empathy.[29] Likewise, although Everett at some stage in his career had to take account of the alien vote, he never really felt its pressures like the working-men of Boston and other poorer social classes. He was, however, conscious of the expense and activity which were necessary to deal with the social problems generated by these newcomers.[30]

Moreover, for Everett, the mass immigration, of not only Irish, but Germans, Scots-Irish, and English, demonstrated America's historic role in absorbing and uplifting the masses and proved to the world the great

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[29]Edward Everett, "The Irish Charitable Society," 17 March 1837, Orations, 2:194-195, "Diary," 10 September 1845, EEP, vol. 164.

[30]Everett to Holland, 30 May 1847, EEP, vol. 81; See also, Everett to The Archbishop of Dublin, 29 July 1847, Everett to Mrs. Davenport, 30 October 1847, EEP, vols. 82, 83, "Diary," 11 January 1848, EEP, vol. 167.

worth of American institutions and her way of life. For those who came, for those who had the strength to resist the temptation of cheap rum, or the cost of cheap flour, which three days labor with the spade would purchase, America provided the opportunity to send their children to school, and by the second generation exhibit a "complete metamorphoses."[31] "If they remain among us, their children go to our public schools, & the next generation is a <u>different race</u>," he wrote the Duchess of Argyll.[32]

This notion of "transformation of the race," was consistent with Everett's ideology of the early 1850's. The Irish, in time, would enter into the American race. Everett did not deny that America benefited by their presence but these benefits were not cultural. Their contribution was their physical presence; the advantage of an ample supply of unskilled labor which met the want of the new country. It was the presence of the "cheap" labor supply which "enable <u>our own people</u> who are better educated & more enterprizing to employ themselves in the higher walks of industry. Without this supply of labor which we call cheap,...we could not have executed our vast works of communication; railroads, and canals.

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[31]Everett to Miss Berry, 19 September 1848, Everett to Miss Edgeworth, 20 March 1849, EEP, vols. 86, 88.

[32]Everett to The Duchess of Argyll, 7 May 1849, EEP, vol. 89; See also, Everett to Senoir, 29 April, 1851, EEP, vol. 97.

Besides this, the fiery celt /sic/ cools down in this country," he wrote Henry Holland in 1852.[33] For those who feared for the structure of society, for those who were alarmed over the possible transformation of American institutions, Everett had comforting words. "We may be somewhat incommoded; but I do not believe the framework of society among us is going to be broken down, or seriously shaken."[34]

It was the religious aspect of the rising American party which caused Everett not only to withhold support, but to challenge its legitimacy. On December 10, 1854, he entered in his diary, "A violent excitement is getting up in the country against the Catholics on the ground of the absurdity of their religious beliefs & the influence of the Pope in Spiritual matters. How much better is the popular faith of the Mass of protestants; how much more independent, original opinion is there?" To Trescot, the whole affair was described as "a humiliating & disgusting spectacle."[35] Following the election in

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[33]Everett to Holland, 2 February 1852, EEP, vol. 99; See also, Everett to The Duchess of Argyll, 3 February 1852, EEP, vol. 99, Edward Everett, "The Effects of Immigration," 18 April 1852, Orations, 3:104.

[34]Everett, "Immigration," Orations, 3:106-107; See also, Edward Everett, "Progress of Agriculture," 7 October 1852, Orations, 3:152-153.

[35]"Diary," 10 December 1854, EEP, vol. 173, Everett to Trescot, 20 October 1854, EEP, vol. 104; See also, Everett to Edward Twisleton, 2 February 1855, EEP, vol. 104, "Diary," 13 November 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

the fall of 1854, with it surprising results which threw the state into the hands of this new party, Everett's only comfort came with the thought that the newly elected Governor Henry J. Gardner was originally a conservative Whig, which seemed however, little in exchange for the loss of the most "faithful, efficient & useful men...."[36] The Know Nothing religious views distressed Everett, their affiliation with the state's freesoil faction seemed to prove that the Know Nothing Party owed its growth to political intrigue and corruption.[37] "At present what with the hold which the Freesoilers have got of the K.N. machinery," he wrote President Fillmore, "the Freesoil tendencies of the Scott Whigs, who stand on the same ground as your Seward Men, - & the disgust of the Conservative whigs at the passage of the Nebraska Bill, - K.N. organization must be regarded in this state as decidedly freesoilish."[38]

Where in the past these factors alone would have prevented Everett's support, the conditions of 1854 were such that he found positive influences in the party's existence. The issue dividing the country in 1854 was not the religious question, but slavery and free-soilism.

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[36]"Diary," 14 November 1854, EEP, vol. 173, Everett to Holland, 11 January 1855, EEP, vol. 104.

[37]"Diary," 8 November 1854, 14 November 1854, EEP, vol. 173.

[38]Everett to Fillmore, 16 December 1854, EEP, vol. 104, "Diary," 8 February 1855, EEP, vol. 174.

"I try to derive a little consolation from reflecting that taking the country thro - K-N may on the principle in some degree of counterirritation prove a remedy for Free Soilism, though here in alliance with it," he wrote to Winthrop after the election.[39] In addition, he could "rejoice" to discover such men as President Fillmore belonged to the Order. This latter fact provided a wedge through which freesoil elements could be purged and control turned over to conservative forces.[40]

By mid 1855, Everett turned toward the possibilities of creating a new national conservative force out of the machinery of the Know Nothing Party. With Fillmore he concurred with the notion that "taking the Union through the K.N.'s must be Conservative."[41] Problems, however, soon became obvious. If the Know Nothing Party was to assume the posture of a national party then it would have to adopt a program upon which both North and South could agree, and the present level of agitation in the north made this extremely difficult. Further, as Everett believed he discovered, the party machinery in Massachusetts was in the hands of "contriving," "selfish," "trading"

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[39]Everett to Winthrop, November 1854, RCWP.

[40]"Diary," 24 December 1854, EEP, vol. 173, Everett to Fillmore, 16 December 1854, 4 April 1855, EEP. vol. 104.

[41]"Diary," 7 February 1855, EEP, vol. 174, Everett to Fillmore, 11 April 1855, EEP, vol. 104.

Free-Soil politicians.[42]

Even after the split within the Know Nothing Party during the Philadelphia meeting in June, 1855, and after the Republican Party gained those freesoil elements, Everett's hopes for the revival of a national conservative force failed to materialize.[43] There were a variety of reasons for this failure. Primarily, Everett believed, the initial coalition with freesoil elements resulted in a lack of respect by conservative men. In addition, Whigs still resented the creation of the new party, he told Fillmore. "Nothing has contributed so much to break down the whig party in Mass as the organization & course of the so called American Party & the fact that you are their candidate, and are supposed to be a member of the order is what will prevent you more than anything else from being more cordially supported by the straight whigs of this States."[44]

As election day 1856 approached, Everett became more depressed. Although he accepted the reality of either a Democratic or Republican president, he felt that both

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[42]"Diary," 13 May 1855, EEP, vol. 174.

[43]"Diary," 15 June 1855, EEP, vol. 174, Everett to T. B. Macaulay, 6 November 1855, Everett to J. Thomas, 2 February 1856, EEP, vol. 105.

[44]Everett to R. Hawes, 10 May 1856, EEP, vol. 106, Everett to Hamilton, 30 June 1856, EEMP, "Diary," 16 June 1856, EEP, vol. 175, Everett to Fillmore (Private and Confidential) 16 July 1856, EEP, vol. 106.

were powerless to stem the tide of disunion. To Ticknor, he noted, that while Buchanan might form a "little stronger government, he could not overcome the feeble nature of the Democratic Party in the free states." "In a word, he concluded, "you know, I think the crisis is near. I hope I may prove a Cassandra:- wholly so, I cannot be, for many persons entertain the same views." On November 4th, Everett went to the polls and voted for President Fillmore. The next day he received news that James Buchanan had been elected.[45]

The election of Buchanan almost completed the total alienation of Everett from politics in America. Though he wrote to Buchanan soon after the victory expressing his pleasure with the results, and offered his opinions of the state of affairs, Buchanan's somewhat cold response dimmed what little hope remained.[46]

By the end of 1856, it seemed clear to Everett that America was in a state of disintegration. The great values of stability and progress which he believed acted as the national cement, were being trampled upon. The decay was reflected in the breakdown of national

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[45]Everett to Ticknor, 2 September 1856, EEP, vol. 106, "Diary," 4 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

[46]Everett to Buchanan, 8 December 1856, EEP, vol. 106; See also, Everett to The Countess of Harrington, 2 December 1856, Everett to Buchanan, 19 January 1857, EEP, vol. 106, 107, "Diary," 12 December 1856, 5 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

institutions; the Bank, the church, the great universities, international order, and national parties. Even the Constitution could not escape this evil force. Those values which Everett had cherished as American, and which had proven their validity not only in the achievements of great men but of the nation, were being set aside, or condemned as the principles of slavery, anti-freedom, and anti-progress.

Everett, therefore, designed for himself a special mission: to restore those values which had declined over the years, and simultaneously to rejuvenize the spirit of nationalism. Even before the election of '56, Everett directed his attention to expanding the influence of the great cultural institutions: the Literary Clubs, Boston Latin School, Public Charity Organizations, and most especially, the Boston Public Library.[47]

Yet Everett realized that the propagation of values through such long range projects as the Library would not save the Union. With the crisis at hand, Everett decided to deliver more public orations. In his speeches

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[47]On the 30th of January, 1855, Everett was appointed President of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Public Library; on February 5, 1856 he was appointed President of the Library and was a member of the commission delegated to build the new Boston Public Library. "Diary," 30 January 1855, 5 February 1856, 8 April 1857, EEP, vols. 174, 175, 176, Edward Everett "Academical Education," 22 April 1857, Orations, 3:498.

on the lives of Peter Chardon Brooks, Abbot Lawrence, General Warren, Thomas Dowse, and Rufus Choate, Everett attached their success to the acceptance, understanding, and application of conservative values. Brooks' success was attributed to his "well balanced mental and moral constitution," to his limited goals in life and contentment with "moderate returns." Lawrence, the successful New England manufacturer, the son of a Revolutionary officer, was portrayed as a man who understood the principles of "liberal conservatism." "He did not think that political wisdom consists in disparaging the characters or undermining the work of our fathers." But of special value was Lawrence's keen insight into the harmonious nature of the sections of the land, the natural bound necessary for progress. And in the life of General Warren, the great revolutionary hero, he found the essence of harmony, Warren had been a man above sectional feeling. The success of Thomas Dowse was the reward of living the rational orderly life. "Industrious, punctual, energetic, intelligent, and upright, he prospered in his calling." A man of simple tastes and "moderate in his expenditure."[48] And in his eulogy of Rufus Choate,

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[48]Edward Everett, "Peter Chardon Brooks," June, 1855, Orations, 3:256, 273-274, Edward Everett, "Obituary Notice for Mr. Lawrence," 18 August 1855, Orations, 3:375-376, 378, Edward Everett, "General Warren," 17 June 1857, Orations, 3:535-536, Edward Everett, "Thomas Dowse," 9 December 1858, Orations, 4:88-89.

he projected his own sense of mission, when he wrote:

> he believed that with patience, with mutual forebearance, with a willingness to think that our brethren, however, widely he may differ from them, may be as honest and patriotic as ourselves, our common country would eventually reach a height of prosperity of which the world as yet has seen no example.[49]

Although these lives reflected American values Everett devoted his full effort to the lives of Webster and Washington. These two men, he believed, were symbolic of American greatness. Their achievements were an archetype for the Anglo-American race. All those virtues found in others existed in greater magnitude in Webster and Washington. "The Great Defender" Daniel Webster was prudent in his nature, moderate in his approach to life, as in all other respects, and a firm believer in a "wise and safe balance of extreme opinions." He applied himself diligently to all aspects of his life. Not one topic did he devote more time to than the study and meditation of the American Constitution. It was his profound belief, derived from this study, Everett recalled, which led him to regard with peculiar reverence, the Covenant of Union between the members of this great and increasing family of States.[50]

But it was to Washington, the greatest of the Age of Greats, the man in history who stood above all, the

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[49]Edward Everett, "Rufus Choate," 23 July 1859, Orations, 4:182-183.

[50]Edward Everett, "Daniel Webster," 17 September 1859, Orations, 4:221.

true symbol of the spirit of America, and of man's potential, the archetypal hero, the ideal, to which Everett, during these years, directed his fullest energies.[51] No less than one hundred and twenty-nine times the orator gave his Washington address. In this mortal man the height of the old and the birth of the new was embodied. He was the symbol of transformation, and the symbol of rebirth. In his lifetime, the people of America were to pass through the "feeblest provincial infancy" into the "powerful, vigoriously acting, earnestly projecting, self-reliant national manhood."[52]

If claims to such solitary eminence among the great and good were to stand, Everett asserted, what was the peculiar and distinctive excellence of Washington's character? Through the character of Washington, Everett conveyed those virtues he called American. In Washington's character, he said, there was neither that brilliance of intellect, nor that quality of mind called genius. Rather a quality, which Everett could only describe as "serene dignity." This quality was the crystallization of those virtues recognized in other great Americans. Washington possessed in abundance prudence, justice, modesty, common sense, balance and harmony, all of which

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[51]Edward Everett, "The Character of Washington," 22 February 1856, Orations, 4:28; See also, pp. 30-31, 45.

[52]Ibid., p. 33.

Everett noted parenthetically, were unpopular today. Then recalling the great painting and statue of Stuart Houdon, Everett conjured this image of the great man. We do not find in Washington, the "lordly brow, no hyacinthine locks, no flashing eye, no dilated nostril, no chisselled lips," but something beyond these qualities. "The stamps of unassuming superiority, sincerity, and truth; a benignant serenity which is more than beautiful; a calm dignity, like that of the affable angel who has put on the lineaments of man."[53]

In the achievement of Washington was to be found the key to all greatness. His achievement was to harmonize with the laws of nature. "It is this," said Everett,

> which chiefly puts him in harmony with more than human greatness. The higher we rise in the scale of being, - material, intellectual, and moral, - the more certainly we quit the region of the brilliant eccentricities and dassling contrasts which belong to a vulgar greatness. Order and proportion characterize the primordial constitution of the terrestrial system; ineffable harmony rules the heaven.[54]

This image is crucial in understanding Everett's nationalism. For Washington, at this point in his thinking, as the ideal of all men, had been transformed into the manifestation of the natural laws of the Universe, that is, divine. His life and character reflected the laws of Divine Wisdom, Everett believed.

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[53] Ibid., pp. 21, 34-38.

[54] Ibid., p. 39.

As this nation was formed, Everett continued, the one man whose character most affected its foundation; by example, recorded opinions, and most especially the creation of institutions, was Washington. Unlike the previous development of nations, the United States was born without precedent, without historical guidance or clue upon which to gaze for the answer to what should be.[55] Thus, it was Washington who breathed life into this nation and as such created the institutions in his image. He was truly the Father of Our Country.[56] It was through Washington that the laws of nature, and the wisdom of the heavens, were inculcated in American institutions, those very institutions now under attack from extremists of both sections.

Of all the institutions which Washington loved most, the one, which in the last testament of his affection, he called on his countrymen to revere above all, was the confederated republic, the Union and its Constitution.[57] In both orations on Webster and Washington, it was the theme of preservation which Everett hoped to convey. By imbuing the spirit of Washington into the Constitution and Union, Everett hoped to overcome the tendencies towards disunion.[58]

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[55] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[56] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

[57] Ibid., pp. 49-51.

[58] Ibid., p. 50; See also, Edward Everett, "Stability,"

If Washington was the spiritual symbol for the nation, Webster's life focused on the nature of Union and its relation to growth and progress. "He /Webster/ did defend the Constitution," Everett reminded the throngs on July 28, 1855,

> not merely as every good citizen is obliged in duty to defend the government under which he lives, but he defended it because it is the guaranty of inestimable blessings, surrounding us on every side. He defended the Constitution of the United States because he felt, as you and I, and all of us feel, that it is a kind of earthly providence, surrounding us alike while we wake and while we sleep, and assuring us an amount of blessings, such as I firmly believe never before were enjoyed by any other people since the creation of this world.[59]

It was Webster who knew that the Constitution was the bulwark of commerce. "He knew, as we all know, that commerce is the great civilizer of nations; the parent of liberty, of the arts, of refinement." It was the Constitution acting through commerce which tied the nations into one harmonious unit. And it was Webster, Everett recalled, who understood that the Constitution broke up the old revolutionary legislation of hostile tariffs, capricious prohibitions, which had made the states as foreign nations to one another. The Constitution,

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Orations, 3:225, Edward Everett, "Launch of the Defender," 28 July 1855, Orations, 3:362-363, Edward Everett, "Daniel Webster as a Man," 18 January 1856, Orations, 3:409-410.

[59]Everett, "Launch of the Defender," Orations, 3:362.

Webster perceived, abolished that condition, and brought us "all into the prosperous intercourse now existing between the several States."[60]

In the past Everett deified the "Spirit of '76" as the historic culmination of the evolution of life, liberty, and equality. The American Revolution was the manifestation of the enlightened age. But the "Spirit of '76," as he saw it, had undergone a strange transformation. Where the spirit in that enlightened age served as a rallying point for the diverse colonial governments, this new generation had adapted it to their call for disunion. Both Northern and Southern disunionists had applied the concepts of liberty and equality in support of their programs. Thus, Everett's later orations, to a remarkable degree, were devoid of what Hans Kohn called, "the Idea of Liberty." Before a crowd in Dorchester on the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Everett described that significant moment not in metaphors of spiritual growth, nor as the unfolding "Idea of Liberty" through history, but as a movement which reflected the

> purity and pristine simplicity of manners that characterized the revolutionary leaders; the almost total absence of those violent and sanguinary incidents that usually mark progress of civil war; and the gradual development, out of the chaos of the struggle, of well-balanced systems of republican government and federal union; in all these respects

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[60] Ibid., pp. 362-363.

> it must be allowed, that there is a solitary dignity and elevation in our American Revolution.[61]

The question which divided America, whether people of that age formed "one People" or were of several colonies, was not on the founders' minds seventy-nine years ago. "That was a period of high patriotic excitement, of fervid sentiment, of impulsive effort against an impending danger. The metaphysics of state are an after-thought of prosperous and speculative times," he concluded.[62] Before an audience at Philadelphia in April, 1856, Everett referred to the significance of the Revolution, not as the beacon of equality and freedom against tyranny, or liberty against slavery, but rather, as the inauguration of the ideas of representative government and confederate union.[63]

Much of Everett's oratory certainly can be challenged for its historical inaccuracies. But the validity of his views is not the issue here. The point is, that all the values and characteristics attributed to these men were considered by Everett to be American values and characteristics. By identifying these values and character traits with the names of Washington and Webster Everett hoped to encourage their emulation. Further,

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[61]Edward Everett, "Dorchester in 1630, 1776, and 1855," 4 July 1855, Orations, 3:298.

[62]Ibid., pp. 346-347.

[63]Edward Everett, "Reception at Philadelphia," 5 April 1856, Orations, 3:413-414.

it is clear that his fundamental conception of the American character had hardly adjusted to the sectional crisis. Though his call for Union and his focus on national political institutions were intensified he could not free himself from his sectional and class orientation. The figure of Washington was closer to Everett's image of himself than to the historical Washington.

Yet the spirit of Washington and the Revolution of '76 failed to evoke the feeling of harmony throughout the country as Everett hoped. The Kansas-Nebraska Act had turned the whole state of Massachusetts over to the extremists. Under these conditions the Union could not last. "The Union will understandably go to pieces eventually on this rock," he wrote. In a deep mood of despair, he reflected, "it was scarcely to be expected that so extensive a region would remain permanently under one government."[64] The decline of conservative influence in America, the failure of the Know-Nothing party to rally moderate men to its ranks, and the heightened rhetoric of the abolitionists seemed to indicate "the beginning of the end."[65]

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[64]Everett to Joseph Cottman, 15 June 1854, EEP, vol. 103; See also, Everett to John Hancock, 2 February 1855, EEP, vol. 104.

[65]Everett to Trescot, 6 June 1855, Everett to G. S. Hillard, 27 September 1855, EEP, vol. 104, "Diary," 22 September 1855, EEP, vol. 174; See also, Everett to Austin Alliboen, 11 December 1855, Everett to Hamilton, 22 December 1855, Everett to Holland, 3 June 1856, Everett to Crittenden, 12 June 1856, EEP, vols. 105, 106, "Diary," 23 May 1856, 25 May 1856, 9 June 1856, 22 July 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

A struggle for property, was the way Everett described the election of 1856. He only wished he could be as optimistic as that Senator who thought that "property would carry the day against unenlightened numbers." But his optimism was dampened by the actions of men like Moses Grinell, Governor Hamilton Fish, Charles Wadsworth, and John A. King, who put themselves at the head of numbers, and he could only believe that "property is very apt to go to the wall." "Those of us who live the years longer (Ishall not)" he wrote in September, 1856,

> will see the worst scenes of the French Revolution acted over again in N.York & Boston. The civil war between the North & South, which is even now impending, will be the least frightful part of the contest. It will be fought from city to city, from village to village, from streetto street, & from house to house. The mob that was set on, to murder Batchilder a year ago for aiding in the extradition of Burns is ready to burn your house & mine whenever it is bid to do so.[66]

The Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court, he considered perhaps the most important decision ever made by the Court.[67] To William H. Trescot, on July 22, 1857, he wrote, "so fully do I share Your apprehensions, that it is destined to prove the grave of the Union."[68] Even the economic crisis of 1857 foretold of the coming

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[66]Everett to Charles A. Davis, 18 September 1856, EEP, vol. 106; See also, "Diary," 1 November 1856, EEP, vol. 175.

[67]Everett to Ticknor, 9 March 1857, EEP, vol. 107; "Diary," 10 March 1857, EEP, vol. 176.

[68]Everett to Trescot, 22 July 1857, EEP, vol. 107.

calamity. In many ways it demonstrated what Everett saw as the decline in American values. In two articles written in 1858, for Robert Bonner of the New York Ledger, who had commissioned him to write fifty-two pieces for $10,000 under the general heading of the "Mount Vernon Papers," Everett expressed his opinions on the collapse. The distress of 1857 was produced by an "enemy more formidable than hostile armies; by a pestilence more deadly than fever or plague; by a visitation more destructive than the frosts of Spring or the blights of Summer. I believe that it was caused by a mountain load of DEBT."[69] On the surface this conclusion might seem childishly obvious. The point which Everett sought to make, however, was of a more sophisticated nature. While advising that occurrences like this might be prevented by controlling the establishment of banks, which create "fictitous currency," the primary factor, Everett suggested, was the general "loss of control" among the populace. The collapse of banks was due to over expansion, noted Everett. But over expansion merely reflected the "larger fiction" evidenced in all individuals, a life based on credit. Men began to deny the validity

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[69]Edward Everett, "Financial Distress of 1857," Mount Vernon Papers, p. 18, p. 167. This series first appeared as a weekly offering in the New York Ledger during 1857. They were then published in a collected work, Edward Everett, The Mount Vernon Papers.

of the virtues of frugality, moderation, etc., and were living beyond their means. In the final analysis, with little hope left for the establishment of the National Bank, the remedy could only be "self regulation of credit."[70]

As the country worked itself out of the crisis, the words of moderation, expressed by Everett, had little effect upon the political minds. On January 28, 1858, Everett attacked the "abominable sentiment" expressed by Wendell Phillips, who, at an Antislavery Society meeting, toasted the first slave insurrection. "'Insurrection' is easily said; "Everett wrote, "but when one considers the horror of blood-shed, fire, and rapine implied in it, it is not easy to pardon the agitators who for the indulgence of their malignant passions trifle with these dreadful realities." Nine months later, he received news of the attempt at insurrection at Harper's Ferry.[71]

The trial of John Brown pushed Everett to adopt a conspiratorial interpretation of events. "The developments made in the trial of Brown at Harper's Ferry prove that leading Republican politicians in New York and N. England were aware of his projects," he

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[70]Edward Everett, "Financial Distress of 1857," Mount Vernon Papers, 19, pp. 177-182. The sum of $10,000 collected for these essays was contributed for the purchase of Mt. Vernon. Everett continued to work on the enterprise to save Mt. Vernon. All monies collected for his Washington oration went toward this end. The sum of $60,000 was eventually contributed.

[71]"Diary," 29 January 1858, 19 October 1859, EEP, vol. 178.

entered in his diary, "though not probably made specifically acquainted with the object - of seizing the armory at Harper's Ferry."[72] In letters to his friends Winthrop and Hiram Powers, Everett's deep despair was reflected. "The affair of Harper's Ferry is of very painful interest," he wrote Winthrop in December. "It produces unmeasured irritation at the South. The extremists at the North have already cannonized Brown. - Emerson calls him 'a sweet Saint.' The attempt is a natural result of the Anti-Slavery agitation, that has been for years carried on, and is one of the Precursors of the final catastrophe, which cannot, I think, be far distant." To Powers he wrote that the spirit of Brown, the public reaction to his adventure, would transform all of New England society into a lawless mob. "That we are not drifting, and that pretty rapidly, into a state of things, when houses will be attacked, - their owners mobbed, statues knocked over, and other lawless outrages become the order of the day, is more than I would affirm." "I own, were it not from the anxiety I feel for my children, I should rejoice that I myself shall soon be 'at rest'."[73]

Once the initial shock of the Brown affair subsided, conservative elements, in an attempt to counter the

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[72]"Diary," 28 October 1859, EEP, vol. 178.

[73]Everett to Winthrop, 13 November 1859, RCWP, Everett to Hiram Powers, 13 December 1859, EEP, vol. 111.

extremism of both sides, called for a show of Union sentiment. On December 8, 1859 a meeting in support of the Union and moderation gathered at Faneuil Hall. Everett was asked to speak to those assembled. Although there was some hesitation, he felt he could not refuse to join, nor decline to speak.[74] In his speech, he justified counselling moderation during the recent years. He warned that many were still clinging to the false belief that the Union would survive even this challenge; that men like him were merely deluding themselves and the populace about the danger at hand, for "business goes on as usual, and the theatres are open, and stocks keep up."[75] This is far from the truth. To those who felt disunion was the answer he would ask them to reflect for a moment, and ask themselves dispassionately "whether anything is to be gained, anything to be hoped, by pushing the present alienation to that fatal bourne, from which, as from death, there is no return?"[76]

The raid on Harper's Ferry, with its intended goal of slave insurrection, forced Everett, once again, to come to grips with the peculiar institution. Since 1854,

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[74]Everett to Sidney Brooks, 20 December 1859, EEP, vol. 111; See also, Everett to Mssrs A. Sanborn & others, 3 January, 1860, EEP, vol. 111, Everett to William Everett, 11 December 1859, Everett to Warren, 19 December 1859, EEP, vol. 111.

[75]Edward Everett, "Union Meeting," 8 December 1859, Orations, 4:235-238.

[76]Ibid., pp. 238-239.

he had made it a point to exclude this subject from his orations, as he believed this would not further peace.[77] The aggravated sectional conflict which the raid precipitated made it impossible in December, 1859 to disregard the question. More significantly, Everett's disheartening experiences during the past five years were clearly reflected in his allusions to the enslaved race. The unemotional conclusions of the scholar, applying the tools of history to archial racial superstitions were no longer evident. Now Everett could only see "an ignorant subject race" using "bosoms pikes and rifles" against "a fair proportion of men and women of education and culture, - of moral and religious lives and character, - virtuous fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, persons who would adorn any station of society, in any country, - men who read the same Bible that we do, and in the name of the same Master kneel at the throne of the same God, - forming a class of men from which have gone forth some of the greatest and purest characters which adorn our history."

Where once he held a vision of a great orderly wave of black men returning to the shores of their native home, possessing the blessing of Anglo-American culture, his attention focused now on the economic consequences of abolition. The South would experience the practical

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[77]Everett to Dr. Osgood, 3 April 1857, EEP, vol. 107.

hardships of a disrupted economy and loss of personal wealth while the North would feel the repercussions of shattered industrial, commercial and manufacturing systems.[78] In both the North and the South problems of social and political integration would emerge. At the age of twenty-six, Everett had seen the Missouri Compromise as the first phase of America's complicity in the slave system, at sixty-five he denied any responsibility. "Have those who rebuke the South for the continuance of slavery considered that neither the present generation nor the preceding one is responsible for its existence? The African slave-trade was prohibited by act of Congress fifty-one years ago, and many years earlier by the separate Southern States. The entire colored population, introduced, is native to the soil"[79]

In other words, by 1860 Everett was not only arguing that slavery was not a political issue and therefore could not be resolved within the political system, but that slavery in no way was connected to the Union. Attacks on the political system would only cause civil disorder and would not settle what was a moral question. Everett believed this position to be consistent with his views on the Anti-Mason and Know Nothing parties. But a clear difference did exist.

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[78]Everett, "Union Meeting," Orations, 4:243-246.

[79]Ibid., p. 245.

Where the Anti-Mason and Know Nothing parties attempted to graft moral questions onto politics slavery was already intimately attached. But Everett could not see this or at least no longer wanted to see this. The Union he envisioned, devoid of conscience, was a "beautiful symetric form" which transmitted "its privileges" and the "boundless wealth of its blessings," to the present and future generations.[80]

During these five years, as Everett sought to bring the sections together, he could not identify, however, with politics. Even the Democratic Party, which drew a national constituency, failed to put forth moderates. He would not even vote in the state elections.[81] In October, 1859, he wrote of his alienation. "I have never known so much apathy so short a time before an election in Massachusetts. For myself, I shall not vote. I justify myself by the example of Socrates and Plato. I cannot conscientiously act with either of the parties which divide the Country; not even so far as to consider one less dangerous than the other."[82]

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[80] Ibid., pp. 246-247. Emphasis mine.

[81] "Diary," 13 November 1857, 2 November 1858, EEP, vols. 176, 177, Everett to N. Capen, 6 October 1858, Everett to William Everett, 31 October 1859, EEP, vol. 109, 111.

[82] Everett to William Everett, 31 October 1859, EEP, vol. 111.

There were, however, some who did not believe that the orator had really withdrawn from politics. In October, 1858, Nathaniel Washburn and M. B. Williams called upon him and asked if he would accept the democratic nomination for the Fourth District, an offer he turned down in the name of ill health. Of greater significance was the initial overture of one J. A. Lucas, who represented the newly organized United Order of Americans. Though Lucas only offered Everett the opportunity to speak under the organizations auspices, Everett noted in his diary, that "He /Lucas/ intimated pretty plainly that they wanted to make a Presidential candidate of me." To this, Everett recorded, "I gave him no encouragement."[83]

In early 1860, as conventions of the great parties were being prepared, a third organization, later to assume the name Constitutional Union Party, appeared. Everett's response to this group was consistent with his views of third parties. In a letter to Charles C. Lathrop, Edward C. Beecher and Fred Grayson, who invited him to attend an organizational meeting, he pointed to the dangers involved in such action. While concurring in their estimate of the critical nature of affairs, he did not see a remedy in the formation of a new party. This would only accomplish further polarization of the present parties with the possible outcome of throwing the

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[83]"Diary," 15 October 1858, EEP, vol. 177.

election into the House of Representatives, a result he warned "always to be deprecated, as throwing a strain upon the weakest part of the Constitution, almost of necessity followed by a feeble administration, and sure to leave our sectional animosities in all their present force."[84] What he advised was a "spontaneous burst" of patriotic feeling and fraternal regard between North and South. The citizens of both sections must, in addition, isolate the few extremists from the mass of right-thinking citizens, and above all, maintain a "conscientious adherence to the Constitution."[85]

It appears that few "right-thinking" people agreed with Everett. At the end of April, the Democrats met at Charleston with the Constitutional Unionists scheduled for the second week in May in Baltimore. The Republicans would meet a week later in Chicago. Everett thought the Democratic party would eventually set forth a platform of generalities and nominate Guthrie. The Republicans would most likely choose Seward. As for the Constitutional Union Convention, there were many possibilities, including men like Houston, Bell, Bates, Judge McLean and Crittenden. Bates and McLean, he believed, to be favorites, as it was thought they could obtain the

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[84]Everett to C. C. Lathrop, Edward C. Beecher, and Fred Grayson, 1 February 1860; See also, Everett to J. H. Ewing, (Private) 20 February 1860, EEP, vol. 111.

[85]Ibid.

Republican nomination as well. As to what position the new party should take in its platform, Everett advised that it should "abstain as much as possible from what will repel recruits to our ranks from any quarter; to seek to conciliate and not irritate." In a letter to John J. Crittenden he wrote, "The Constitution of the United States is Platform enough & the public character of individuals sufficient to guaranty for their fidelity to it."[86]

If there were some who would put his name before the convention as a presidential candidate, a letter to George Hillard and a telegram to members of the Massachusetts delegation was sufficient to dissuade them. On May 9, Everett wrote that only if his name stood alone before the convention, would he accept. This event would not occur, he believed, as several other names had been brought forward and were likely to be urged. He desired that at the proper moment, in the name of unanimity, his name be withdrawn.[87]

Thus on the tenth of May, when Everett received word that the Convention had nominated John Bell as President and himself as Vice-President, he was both embarrassed and annoyed. "My earnest wish is to decline," he wrote to Robert Bonner. "I am vehemently urged not to

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[86]Everett to J.P. Kennedy, 7 May 1860, Everett to Crittenden, 7 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

[87]Everett to Hillard, 9 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112, "Diary," 10 May 1860, EEP, vol. 179.

do so and the most fervid appeals are made to my Patriotism to sacrifice personal inclination for the public good. I am embarrassed & annoyed and if I can extricate myself without too greatly offending my friends, I shall do so."[88] And in a letter to John Gilmer, he expressed the dilemma the nomination had created for him.

> Having, as I thought, taken sure means to prevent my nomination as president, I cannot deny that the nomination as V-P took me much by surprise. It places me in the painful situation of whether contradicting the often repeated assurance that I had definitively retired from Public life, or greatly disobliging the friends who were good enough to put me in nomination. If I now accept the first nomination thrown in my way, it will be difficult to escape the imputation of insincerity and affectation.[89]

After giving the matter due consideration, and weighing the advice of friends, Everett decided to accept.[90] To his son William he wrote that his decision was prompted by a desire not to offend his friends nor hurt the Union cause.[91] As to running on a ticket headed by John Bell,

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[88]Everett to Bonner, 12 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112. Confusion over the nominating procedure is perhaps responsible for Everett's nomination. There was no balloting for Vice-President, but nomination by acclamation. See also, "Diary," 11 May 1860, EEP, vol. 179, Everett to Washington Hunt, 14 May 1860, Everett to J. P. Kennedy, 17 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

[89]Everett to John A. Gilmer, 24 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

[90]"Diary," 13 May 1860, 17 May 1860, 21 May 1860, 22 May 1860, 24 May 1860, 26 May 1860, EEP, vol. 179, Everett to William Everett, 15 May 1860, Everett to A. Hyde, 16 May 1860 (Private), EEP, vol. 112.

[91]Everett to William Everett, 10 June 1860; See also, Everett to Miss A.E. Carroll, 29 May 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

Everett was anything but enthusiastic. His past acquaintance with Bell had been limited, even though they had shared committee assignments in the Senate during Everett's brief tenure. There is hardly any mention of Bell in Everett's writings, except one brief note in his diary of February 11, 1853:

> Mr. Eames sat next to Gov. Bell of Tennessee yesterday, who spoke with great bitterness of me. The grievance was that I had appointed another person to a small consulate in the place of one whom he recommended & that I had told him to his face that the weight of recommendation was in favor of the other candidate! Other grievances that I was cold & my Cuban letter was filibustering & that he would persecute me as long as he lived: - The real grievance is that I have received a foreign mission, which he has long desired in vain & that I was appointed Secretary of State instead of himself. Supposing the grievances much greater than they are, the sentiment underscored would become a Creek Indian better than a christian Senator.[92]

In all likelihood this feeling was lost over the years, for though Everett wrote to his friend Crittenden that he would have preferred him to Bell, there were no disparaging words for the latter.[93]

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[92]"Diary," 11 May 1853, EEP, vol. 172.

[93]Everett to Crittenden, 2 June 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

CHAPTER XIII

A LOYAL AMERICAN

The nomination for vice-president did not fundamentally change Everett's life or his views. With receipt of the news that Seward had lost the Republican nomination to Lincoln - just retribution, he thought, for the man who for the last twenty years had built a party on antislavery agitation and had "done as much as any other person to bring about the present critical state of things;" with the eventful split of the Democratic party at the end of June, Everett saw little hope for the Constitutional Union ticket or, for that matter, the Union.[1] The thought of victory never entered his mind.[2]

The election would most probably go to the "Black Republicans," he believed. Thus the present level of antislavery excitement would continue to be the basis of all political activity, making cooperation between

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[1]"Diary," 18 May 1860, 22 June 1860, 23 June 1860, EEP, vol. 179.

[2]Everett to William Everett, 8 July 1860, Everett to John C. Watson, (Private) 4 August 1860, Everett to William Everett, 18 September 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

the North and South impossible. "The result must be separation."[3] There was, however, one slim chance of defeating Lincoln. Apparently acting on his own, Everett suggested that a coalition of all the opposing parties be created. To former Governor Hunt of New York, he set forth his plan. The Union might be saved if either of the Democratic nominees were elected. Both Douglas and Breckinridge had supporters in the non-slaveholding states as well as in the South. A national leader, therefore, would exist. Few supported this position and Everett soon stopped his pursuit, though he continued to believe the plan had merit.[4]

For the most part, Everett's time was consumed during these election months defending his position as a conservative. His southern opposition pointed to his endorsement of antislavery propositions when he had been governor in order to support the claim that Everett was an abolitionist, while certain northerners pictured him as no better than a "doughface." It was to the former challenges that Everett directed himself. If the Constitutional Union party was to have an impact, its hopes rested on the border and southern states.[5]

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[3]"Diary," 22 June 1860, EEP, vol. 179, Everett to William Everett, 25 June 1860, 8 July 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

[4]Everett to Gov. Hunt, 21 July 1860, EEP, vol. 112, "Diary," 14 September 1860, EEP, vol. 179.

[5]Everett to John Speed, 22 July 1860, EEP, vol. 112. In a letter to Gov. Wise Everett indicated his disappointment

Everett delivered one major speech during this period. On the 4th of July, he addressed the city authorities of Boston. The topic was the vindication of American institutions. In this oration Everett never mentioned slavery nor did he touch on any political issue. His purpose was to convey an image of a man who was above sectional antagonisms. He recognized, he said, the great value of the Union not only for each American but for the world. The eyes of the world were upon America this day and the destiny of liberal principles of government were under public scrutiny. Remember the benefits of Union, he pleaded. Compare our prosperity with that of Europe. Compare the growth of civilization in America and note that no other example of growth in such a short period of time is evidenced in the history of the world.[6] Only one who had been successful whose hopes had been fulfilled could put forth this vision. But many in America were discontent and their lives were not fulfilled. Everett did not speak to these.

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over the Governor's questioning his conservatism. Everett noted that he was particularly bothered by this action since he supported the Governor's actions in handling the Harper's Ferry affair. Everett to Gov. Wise, 8 August 1860, EEP, vol. 112. See also, Everett to Rogert Ridgway, 1 September 1860, EEP, vol. 112.

[6]Edward Everett, "Vindications of American Institutions," 4 July 1860, Orations, 4:284-295.

Everett's hopes for the Union suffered a serious setback with the election of Abraham Lincoln. A few days before the election, Everett expressed the optimistic hope that the South might not secede even if Lincoln were successful. "Rash and violent men, in that part of the Union, threaten secession, in the event of Lincoln's election; but I cannot think the majority will be so ill-advised. The danger is, that rash and violent men may perpetuate mischief, which sober and wise men cannot arrest or repair."[7]

This optimism soon dissipated as Everett recognized that the election did not quiet the "real passion" and "braggadocio" manifest in the South.[8] News of the hoisting of the Palmetto flag in Charleston and Columbia prompted Everett to write, "How far this madness may go, it is impossible to foresee."[9] Little relief was expected from the actions of Lincoln. He would surely organize the government on the basis of antislavery agitation which sustained the party, Everett wrote General Coombs on November 19. This would necessarily repel any or all cooperation on the part of the South, "and thereby reduces the Federal Government to the rule of the non-slaveholding over the slave holding states,

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[7]Everett and Holland, 30 October 1860, "Diary," 2 November 1860, EEP, vol. 113, 179.

[8]"Diary," 1 November 1860, 9 November 1860, EEP, vol. 179.

[9]"Diary," 10 November 1860, 11 November 1860, 13 November 1860, 16 November 1860, EEP, 179, Everett to Bates, 13 November 1860, EEP, vol. 113.

which cannot possibly be permanent."[10]

There was a chance that the dilemma facing the victorious party might provide a solution. The Republicans, he wrote Col. William M. Byrd, had only captured the executive branch and not the legislative or judiciary. In order to carry on the functions of government, therefore, they would seek to "buy" southern support at almost any price. This would eventually alienate the radical wing of their party, and prepare the way for the restoration of constitutional principles throughout the Union. This course depended upon the South preceding with caution and deliberation.[11] But the South could not be restrained. On November 28, 1860, Everett wrote to Dr. Holland that South Carolina would leave the Union. How many of the cotton states would follow this perilous course or what consequences would follow this action was impossible to foresee.[12]

On December 21, 1860, Everett received news of South Carolina's secession. Even Crittenden's resolution, which Everett endorsed, would not save the Union from disaster, he believed. "I am very much saddened by the

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[10]Everett to Coombs, 19 November 1860, EEP, vol. 113.

[11]Everett to Col. Byrd, 23 November 1860, EEP, vol. 113.

[12]Everett to Holland, 26 November 1860, EEP, vol. 113.

prospect before us," he wrote his son William, on the 24th.[13]

There were others, however, who still had hope. On January 21, 1861, a group of citizens gathering names to appear on a "Union Memorial" asked Everett to head the committee to present the petition at Washington. This he agreed to do and, with others, arrived at the nation's capitol on January 24.[14] After meeting with various congressional leaders-including Crittenden, Seward, Sumner, and Wilson-and after presenting the memorial wrapped in the flag of the United States, Everett, still in a state of depression, returned home to Boston.

Any hope that resolution would come from the executive branch was diminished by Everett's low opinion of the president-elect. He thought Lincoln, lacking in moral strength and possessing less ability than Buchanan, was unqualified to lead the nation.[15] At the end of January, 1861, he wrote, "The President elect is making zig-zag progress to Washington, called out

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[13]"Diary," 21 December 1860, EEP, vol. 179, Everett to Crittenden, 23 December 1860, Everett to William Everett, 24 December 1860, 7 January 1861, EEP, vol. 113; See Also, "Diary," 19 January 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

[14]"Diary," 21 January 1861, 6 January 1861, EEP, vol. 180, Everett to Alfred Taylor, 21 January 1861, Everett to J.W. Bradbury, 22 December 1861, EEP, vol. 113.

[15]Everett to Hillard, 29 November 1860, Everett to J.R. Thompson, 17 December 1860, Everett to Townsend Ward, 20 December 1860, EEP, vol. 113, "Diary," 19 January 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

to make short speeches at every important point. These speeches thus far have been of the most ordinary kind destitute of everything not merely of felicity & grace, but of common pertinence. He is evidently a person of very inferior cast of character, wholly unequal to the crisis."[16]

Once hopes of a peaceful solution dimmed, Everett's thoughts centered on possible chances of future reconciliation. Reconciliation, he believed, was directly related to the course of secession. It must be consummated peacefully and without bloodshed. After the South had "a brief experience of the burdensome experience, inconvenience, and danger of separation," it would be possible to reconstitute the Union. But here too, the nation's destiny was in the hands of President-elect Lincoln, for he would determine whether secession would be peaceful. Lincoln's Inaugural Address did not alter his low opinion. "The tone is as conciliatory as possible," he wrote on March 4, "but the intention is intimated of holding the forts & calling the duties in the ports of the seceded States. Either measure will result in Civil War which I am compelled to look upon as almost certain."[17]

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[16]"Diary," 24-28 January 1861, 15 February 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

[17]Everett to Lady Denison, 18 February 1861, Everett to the Duke of New Castle, 4 March 1861, Everett to Sidney Everett, 5 March 1861, Everett to Holland, 5 March 1861, EEP, vol. 113, "Diary," 4 March 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

Lincoln's choice of cabinet officers reinforced this attitude. He thought it inconceivable that Lincoln would organize his administration so exclusively on a sectional basis. "The truth is the Administration has no plan & is merely running for luck; securing the offices & letting the country take care of itself. We shall move forward with the momentum previously acquired for a short time & then a general crash."[18]

By the middle of March, he believed that the future of the Union rested with the border states. The function of every patriot, he wrote, was to try to keep the border states in the Union. "Our brethren in the extreme South, finding their experiment of separate government burdensome and unsatisfactory, will return to the bosom of the Union, and renew the ancient ties of peace, good will, and mutually beneficial intercourse."[19]

Thus, he focused on the confrontation at Fort Sumter. Not only would the border states be influenced by the final outcome of this crisis, he reasoned, but future relations depended upon a peaceful settlement. While in Washington with the "Union Memorial," Everett suggested that Major Anderson be withdrawn from the fort and that no attempt be made to collect the duties on board ships of war off the coast of seceded states.

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[18]"Diary," 6 March 1861, 8 March 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

[19]Everett to Stingerland, 17 March 1861, EEP,vol. 113.

Unless this course were pursued, he wrote William Trescot, "a civil war of gigantic dimensions and unsurpassed bitterness will infallibly occur. Such a war might result in the conquest and dessolution of the South, never in her return to the Union, as a harmonious group in the Confederacy."[20]

Everett continued to see a deeper social malady underlying the crisis. The society of reason and moderation had been displaced by the forces of extremism, deception, and irrationality. Abstraction clouded the air. There were absolutely "no material interests at stake," he wrote Henry Holland on March 31, 1861. "But the politicians on each side of the line, for selfish purpose, will keep up the war on abstraction."[21] The Republican party had fought and won the election on the principle that slavery should not be extended into the territories of the United States, he told Holland. Though no one pretended that slavery would ever go into any territory, the election was nevertheless made to "turn on this abstract proposition." Once elected, this party was willing to admit the whole territory of New Mexico into the Union and passed laws organizing three

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[20]Everett to William Everett, 17 March 1861, Everett to Trescot, 23 March 1861, Everett to Mrs. Jefferson Jackson, 15 March 1861, EEP, vols. 113, 114.

[21]Everett to Holland, 31 March 1861, EEP, vol. 113.

new territories without antislavery restrictions. Southerners were not satisfied with this practical solution of the crisis, for they too were "abstractionists." They demanded "the concession of the principle, and require a categorical assent, on the part of the North to their dogma, viz; that slavery exists in the territories by Constitutional right, which needs no law for its confirmation, and which no law can abrogate."[22] These abstractions, he felt, by April 3, 1861, made the President's situation impossible.

> He cannot do his duty in any one point. It is his duty to preserve the Union, he cannot. It is his duty to hold or regain the Southern forts, he cannot. It is his duty to conciliate the Southern States, he cannot. This impossibility arises from the fact that he represents a party organized on a principle destructive to the Constitution. That principle is compromise. The Republican party long since proclaimedthat the day of Compromise was past.

Advising Dr. Hubbard Winslow on the upcoming program for the Union Convention to be held on March 26, Everett wrote, "It is always wiser in political discussions, to confine yourself to practical issues. Men will often agree in them who differ on abstract questions."[23] While speaking in Columbus, Ohio, Everett received news of the bombardment of Fort Sumter. Five days later he was back in Boston.

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[22]Everett to Holland, 31 March 1861, EEP, vol. 114.

[23]"Diary," 3 March 1861, EEP, vol. 180, Everett to Rev. Winslow, 25 March 1861, vol. 114.

News of the attack on Sumter and the mobilization of the Union significantly changed Everett's position. Though he had disapproved of the policy pursued by the Republican Party, the action of the secessionists left him no alternative but to support the administration. Although he detested the environment which precipitated the struggle, his loyalities were now clear. "In as much as it is now an alternative between supporting the government and allowing the country to fall into a state of anarchy, & general confusion, I cannot hesitate as to the path of duty," he entered into his diary on April 17, 1861.[24]

War, for Everett, was the very essence of that confused, extreme, and irrational condition into which a nation was drawn when moderate and rational councils were suppressed. Civil war intensified this condition and added the factor of social upheaval. The images of the French Revolution and the conflicts of 1830 and 1848 were always in Everett's mind. Thus he felt a great relief when internal divisions did not appear in either section. "The fact of Fort Sumter has raised this part of the Country to a feeling unknown since the Stamp Act," he wrote Crittenden. "Indeed there is much nearer approach to unanimity now than in 1775." "All political issues are forgotten or postponed;" he told his son,

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[24]"Diary," 17 April 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

William, "and men of all parties unite in support of the government, the only means of rescuing the government from general anarchy and confusion."[25] There was one feature of the war, he wrote the Countess of Harrington, which, if it continues, will divest it of the worst aggravations of civil war. The great unanimity of feeling in the two sections "will preserve us from the calamity usually incident to civil contests, of carrying the war into neighboring cities in the same district, neighboring streets in the same town and even into houses and families." To those moderate men who feared for their position, Everett prescribed a course to be followed. To Robert Bonner, he suggested that his paper include a few cordial patriotic sentences on the duty of supporting the Union, the government, and maintaining the honor of the flag. He also advised that he display a flag at his office, and "make a liberal contribution towards some of the numerous patriotic funds." This, he concluded, would meet the requirements of a good citizen.[26]

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[25]Everett to Crittenden, 18 April 1861, Everett to William Everett, 22 April 1861; See also, Everett to Lt. H. A. Wise, 18 April 1861. He advised his son-in-law, that although a southerner he retain his commission, and suggested that only by supporting the government could the country be preserved from "general anarchy & confusion." Wise accepted his advice. EEP, vol. 114. "Diary," 14 April 1861, 17-20 April, 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

[26]Everett to the Countess of Harrington, 30 April, 1861, Everett to Robert Bonner, 24 April 1861, EEP, vol. 114.

On April 27, 1861, at flag-raising ceremonies in Chester Square, Boston, Everett called for an end to internal divisiveness. "We set up this standard /the flag/ my friends, not as a matter of idle display, but as an expressive indication that, in the mighty struggle that has been forced upon us, we are of one heart and one mind that the government of the country must be sustained."[27] No longer were the disrupters to be found in both sectional camps. The enemy resided below the Mason-Dixon line. No longer needed as intermediary, Everett was relieved.

Everett's hostility to the doctrine of secession had been expressed in the past and had not changed. To Sir Henry Holland, he said that, although it was painful to apply the name "rebellion" to the action of former associates (he used it as little as possible) it was still necessary. To admit it was anything other than a rebellion was to concede a major point. "If it is not a rebellion then it is a legitimate public war of one nation upon another, and this cannot be admitted without acknowledging the wretched and suicidal logic of 'Secession'!"[28] Furthermore, Everett would not accept

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[27]Edward Everett, "Flag Raising at Chester Square," 27 April 1861, Orations, 4:326.

[28]Everett to Holland, 21 July 1861, EEP, vol. 114; See also, Edward Everett, "The Arch Blunder," New York Ledger, 24 February 1863, Edward Everett,"John C. Calhoun," New York Ledger, 16 February 1864, Edward Everett, "East Tennessee." In reference to the Doctrine of Secession,

the southern notion that they made up a distinct people. The people are the citizens living under the United States government. The South made up a third of the people and therefore had no right to establish their own government and destroy that which the majority desires. "Break up the Union," he wrote, "and you destroy our Existence as a people."[29]

In an article entitled "Sink Down ye Mountains and ye Valleys Rise!" which was part of larger series entitled "Leisure Hours" for the New York Ledger, Everett pointed to the abundance of natural resources, the exceptional climate, and the vast plains which made up America. "It is plain that the political destiny of the country is the inevitable result of these primordial physical conditions," he wrote. The "Sovereign Power, I say, which has ordained these natural conditions of our climate, of its soil, and of its productions, has enacted a law of Unity, has framed a constitution of political and social Brotherhood, which man has not ordained and cannot, if he would, abrogate." Given this metaphysical foundation of the Union, Everett argued that secession

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New York Ledger, 15 March 1864, Edward Everett, "The Ordinary Meaning of Words Changed by the Leaders of the Rebellion," New York Ledger, 18 April 1864.

[29]"Diary," 29 May 1861, EEP, vol. 180, Everett to Dean Milman, 3 March 1861, EEP, vol. 116. Emphasis mine.

was more than a mere political sin, it was a sin against the diety, against the primordial condition which directed the destiny of the nation.[30]

If Everett had been alienated by the political maneuvering of the northern majority, it had still functioned within recognized political forms. Besides rejecting his moderate role, Southern action from the beginning, Everett now argued, was designed to prevent a peaceful adjustment. The South, he told the Virginian John Speed, had not only pursued a policy during the past thirty years designed to break up the Union as soon as it ceased to control the government, but had subverted and deceived those conservative men in the North who sought to strengthen the hands of patriotic men in the South. This was achieved by placing the conservative North in a false and indefensible position, by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the persevering attempts to force slavery into Kansas through the techniques of fraud and violence against the known wish of an overwhelming majority of the people.

Despite this policy and the manner in which secession was initiated by the state of South Carolina and followed

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[30]Edward Everett, "Sink Down Ye Mountains and Ye Valleys Rise!", New York Ledger, 11 May 1861, Emphasis mine. Edward Everett, "The Causes and Conduct of the War," 16 October 1861, Orations, 4:482-483.

by other cotton states; notwithstanding the seizures of the public establishments and public property, which Everett deemed "sheer plunder"; he and others had been for a peaceful separation. But the wanton attack on Fort Sumter, carried out without any military necessity, merely to stir up the South and bring in the border states, and the subsequent events at Montgomery wholly changed the state of affairs. The South, Everett declared, has levied "an unprovoked war against the Government of the United States, the mildest & most beneficient in the world, and made it the duty of every good citizen to rally to its support." Though he too deprecated the election of a president exclusively by the electoral vote of one section of the country, the South had the power to produce a different result. "But the disunionists were determined to have their own candidate, though mistaken I trust in the belief that he shared their disloyal views."

After the election, Everett continued, the disunionists would not wait for "overt acts," because they knew none could or would be committed. They knew that there was an anti-Republican majority in the Senate and that there would be one in the House of Representatives. "They 'precipitated' the rupture of the Union because they knew that if they waited even the pretext of it would fail." Even the actions of Congress after secession guaranteed that the constitutional rights of the South

would not be threatened, even after the two houses pledged themselves against any future amendment to the Constitution violating the rights of the South and the accredited leaders of the Republican party endorsed that pledge, even after Mr. Adams from Massachusetts proposed to admit New Mexico and the other three territories without any antislavery restrictions, the South responded with violence. "These conciliatory demonstrations had no effect in staying the progress of secession, because the leaders of that revolution were determined not to be satisfied, and to maintain their policy, which in the light of the Constitution is a simple usurpation, they have appealed to the sword." The entire North, Everett concluded, feels that the conflict was forced upon it "to gratify the aspirations of ambitious men, and that it is our duty to ourselves, to our children, and to the whole people to sustain the government, and that it is if possible more the interest of the South than the North that this attempt to prostrate it would fail."[31]

The deep effect the Southern course had on Everett, especially after he attributed his political demise to his

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[31]Everett to Speed, 15 May 1861, EEP, vol. 114; See also, Everett to Mrs. Gilpin, 4 May 1861, Everett to L. M. Burwell, 17 May 1861, Everett to Holland, 10 June 1861, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 30 September 1861, EEP, vols. 114, 115, Edward Everett, "The Question of the Day," 4 July 1861, Orations, 4:399-405.

attempts at reconciliation, was reflected not only in this newly arrived at theory of the war's causation, but in a general hostility toward future compromise. Although Everett responded favorably to a petition of peace being circulated, he cautioned against any statement mentioning "compromise or guarantees satisfactory to the south." "I cannot see that all our efforts at 'conciliation' last winter did the least good. The only effect was to embarrass ourselves, when it became necessary to rally to the support of the government." In October, 1862 after Winthrop suggested that recent "conservative" election victories pointed the direction which must be taken to restore the Union, Everett doubted this course. "I have never known the South conciliated in the slightest degree by any measure of Compromise," he wrote. "They despise us for making them. They will submit when they are thoroughly beaten and their leaders utterly descredited & not before."[32]

On the Fourth of July, 1861, Everett presented the views expressed in the Speed letter in a public oration entitled, "The Questions of the Day." In this speech he proceeded to reject each southern claim of oppression. He denied the South had been hurt by the American monopoly of coastal shipping. This was necessary, he said, for the growth of the country's navy and commerce. He asked

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[32]Everett to A. A. Lawrence, 27 June 1861, EEP, vol. 114, "Diary," 19 October 1862, EEP, vol. 181.

rhetorically, whether the South would have jeopordized this factor for some small benefit. Besides, this growth brought the South naval protection. And if the North had been aided by the protection of manufacturing, the cotton culture expanded under the protection afforded by the government on the import of cotton. As to the claims that the failure of the North to resolve the fugitive slave laws was responsible for the flight of slaves, Everett argued that few if any slaves were lost to the North.[33]

And on October 16, 1861, Everett expressed his conspiracy theory before the Mercantile Library Association of Boston, in a speech entitled "The Causes and Conduct of the Civil War." It was a small group of men - some thirty years ago, he claimed, who saw that the growth of population was going in favor of the free states, and perceived that in time they would lose their monopoly over the national government who designed a plan to break up the Union. "This was to be effected, by producing upon the popular mind of the South the impression that her local interests were sacrificed to those of the North; absurd as such a suggestion was, in face of the fact that the South had always possessed, and possessed at that time, a controlling influence in the government." The attempt was first made in reference to the tariff.

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[33]Edward Everett, "The Questions of the Day," 4 July 1861, Orations, 4:377-380, 387, 423-424.

While the South generally prospered and its population increased especially in the new Southern states, a sign of growth and not decay, Everett said, "the politicians of the Carolina school succeeded, by unremitted agitation, in persuading their deluded followers that the South was suffering grievous oppression on the part of the North."[34]

Though a great majority of people in the free states shrunk from agitation over slavery, the South from the first did more to make the question of slavery an element of party politics. In the past, the South got her way; presidents were elected either from the South or were northerners sympathetic to her problems. She repealed the Missouri Compromise. Finally, the whole force of the Federal government was used to force slavery upon Kansas. "Nothing, however, satisfied her," Everett argued, "because her leaders were predetermined not to be satisfied. The project of disunion was openly avowed; conventions having that treasonable object in view were held, and preparation, political and military, everywhere made for the rupture." Everett then detailed the 'flimsy' pretenses for secession up through the final assault on Fort Sumter, which appeared originally in the Speed letter. The latter event, he stated, was designed specifically to draw to its cause Virginia and the border states.[35]

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[34]Edward Everett, "Conduct of War," Orations, 4, 466-467.

[35]Ibid., pp. 472-475, 478-481.

In April, 1861, Edward Everett met President Lincoln for the first time and was immediately impressed with his manner & appearance. By early 1863, Everett's commitment to the administration's cause was so obvious that members of the newly organized "Union Club," invited him to join. Ticknor's concern that the club was regarded by conservatives as a Jacobin Association brought forth Everett's remark that "Conservatives here & elsewhere are about as far gone in one extreme as the radicals in the other." Not only did Everett attend the meeting, but on the 18th of February, he was elected president.[36] Though Everett soon began to have doubts about the direction of the Union Club, fearing it had fallen into the hands of the Radical wing of the Republican party, he nevertheless accepted the presidency again in 1864.[37]

The loyal population responded favorably to Everett's wholehearted support of the government as well. In April, 1861, he was appointed to the Committee of One Hundred for the formation of a general soldiers' fund. Later in May, with Charles Parker and E. R. Hoar, Everett was appointed to a committee to address the President

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[36]"Diary," 7 April 1861, 17 February 1863, 27 February 1863, 28 February 1863, EEP, vols. 180, 182.

[37]"Diary," 6 March 1863, 14 December 1863, EEP, vol. 182.

respecting aid for Union men in East Tennessee. This latter interest took a good deal of Everett's time during the remainder of his life. In February, 1864, he organized with C.C. Loring and John Winthrop among others the Committee to Aid Union Men in East Tennessee. By July 31, 1864, this organization had collected approximately one hundred thousand dollars.[38] And if the University of Virginia abolished the "Everett Medal," established in May, 1859 for the best essay, compensation came in his appointment as president of the Massachusetts Charitable Congregational Society. In addition, on the 14 of July, 1861, Everett was appointed as Justice of the Peace and Quorum.[39]

The war years, therefore, acted as a catalyst in moving Everett's nationalist ideology to its logical conclusion. The 1850's had witnessed Everett's preoccupation with the theory of natural organic growth. He had resurrected the symbol of Washington and canonized his spiritual connection with the birth of American institutions. But Everett's alienation from political power proved an obstacle for the final step. The war years provided the necessary impulse for the completion

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[38]"Diary," 3 February 1864, 10 February 1864, EEP, vol. 183, Everett to Lloyd Smith, 24 February 1864, EEP, vol. 120, Edward Everett, "Aid to East Tennessee," 10 February 1864, Orations, vol. 4.

[39]"Diary," 27 April 1861, 23 May 1861, 25 May 1861, 27 May 1861, 14 June 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

of his views on American nationalism.

Since Everett now defined the nation in terms of its political institutions, the war proved to him that only a strong national government could guarantee their existence. Though he always endorsed the nationalist creed, the sectional propensities of federal officials and the questionable nationalist credentials of some executive leaders prevented Everett from making the final identification between the federal government and the nation. The war ended all doubts. He now identified the North, the Union, and , most significantly, the federal administration as the nation. If, in the past, he had relied on "union sentiment" as the cohesive element, the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the secession of the South, the civil disorders and opposition in the North demonstrated these sentiment's fragile nature. He concluded, therefore, that only a strong government could provide the necessary glue to maintain the nation. In other words, without a strong national government the nation could not survive.[40] Furthermore, if Everett in the past had linked the American character with the political system, an American was still defined by certain values and character traits. The war fundamentally ended this approach. As Everett now saw it, an American was one who was loyal to the national government.

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[40]David Potter, "Nationalism and the Civil War," in Essays in Comparative History, C. Van Woodward, ed., (New York, 1969).

Unity behind the government would not only bring a quick conclusion to the conflict, he wrote in August, 1863, but would demonstrate to those in Europe who challenged the suppositions of the American system that a free government resting on democratic suffrage, could "prosecute with vigor a war of considerable duration, and which entails heavy burdens upon the community."[41] Nor would he accept the war as proof, as some in Europe might allude, that the "Bubble of Democracy has burst." "Slavery-partly as the real cause, and partly as the popular pretext-and nothing else, is the cause of the struggle," he wrote R.C. Wyllie, "and slavery, whether as a cause or pretext is so far from being associated with universal suffrage, is wielded by a very small minority of the population of the slave-holding states."[42]

The New York draft riots, though considered a barbaric act by Everett, in no way contested this view. Bad as the riot was, he wrote his son Sidney, it was no worse than the mobs of Bristol and Nottingham at the time of the Reform Bill or the Gordon riots in 1780. Nevertheless, the acts in New York indicated the need to heighten support for the administration. "The strength

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[41]Everett to Union Massachusetts Convention in Springfield, 24 August 1863, in Evening Journal Documents, no. 1; See also, Everett, "Union Club," 9 April 1863, Orations, vol. 4.

[42]Everett to R. C. Wyllie, 27 July 1863, EEP, vol. 119; See also, Everett to Mrs. Anna Storm, 7 March 1862, EEP, vol. 116.

of an elective and popular government, in troublous times," he wrote Charles Francis Adams, "will be subjected to a severer trial for the next 18 months than perhaps ever before."[43] If party spirit was allowed to prevail, he told James Conkling, in August, 1863, then the errors of government would be intensified and blown out of proportion until public interest was taken from the great struggle, which will aid and comfort the enemy. Though he rejected some of the administration's policies, he could not but support the government which prosecuted the war.[44]

Everett's orations, while serving to heighten patriotic emotion, also reflected his intention to influence English opinion. In May, 1861, Edward Hale called on Everett to inform him that the attorney general of the Commonwealth had expressed the wish that he come forward with an argument on the state of the controversy between the two sections, with a view to influencing opinion in England. Everett wrote that the attorney general believed that "anything from me would have much greater weight, than the official statements of the Government or its accredited servants."[45]

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[43]Everett to Sidney Everett, 21 July 1863, Everett to Adams, 21 July 1863, EEP, vol. 119.

[44]Everett to James Conkling, 24 August 1863, EEP, vol. 119.

[45]"Diary," 17 May 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

Everett thought he might persuade his English friends against taking hasty action, but before he could offer his views word arrived that London had reached a decision. Even before the arrival of the newly appointed envoy, Charles Francis Adams, the British recognized the belligerency of the Confederacy and issued a proclamation of neutrality. On May 28, 1861, Everett sent a sharp letter to Lord Russell. This decision, he wrote, was especially repulsive and unwarranted in light of England's past hostility to the slave system. To compare the struggle of the freedom-loving Greeks against the Turks with the Confederacy's attack on the loyal states demonstrated a "coldness and want of sympathy."[46]

Everett recognized that the conspiracy theory of power, alone, would not sway English opinion. A war policy directed toward the elimination of slavery would be more likely to receive a favorable response. "We had reason to suppose that a civil war waged upon the Constitution, in fact the very existence of the United States, for the purpose of forcing slavery into the unoccupied territories, you would have gone to the limits of the law of Nations, in showing that your sympathies are with us," he wrote Speaker Denison, in July, 1861.[47]

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[46]Everett to Lord Russell, 28 May 1861, EEP, vol. 114.

[47]Everett to Speaker Denison, 22 July 1861, EEP, vol. 114; See also, Everett to Bates, 11 November 1861, EEP, vol. 115. In a letter to Henry Holland Everett wrote, "The issue of the war did not stem from features

And after the Emancipation Proclamation, when the shackles of constitutional law were broken, Everett described the "terrible war" as "becoming every day more & more distinctly a war between freedom and Slavery." He hoped that once it was understood that ambitious men in the Southern States were waging a cruel contest for the sake of breaking the union and establishing "a new government on the Corner Stone of Slavery," Europeans would forfeit that sympathy and aid from abroad, which had hitherto upheld the Confederacy.[48]

The question of slavery, however, was absent from most of Everett's public statements during the war years, especially those years preceding the Emancipation Proclamation. He justified this exclusion in a letter written to R. B. Forbes in October, 1862. The issue, he said, would only create divisiveness in the states and thus extend the war. The divisions over this issue during the recent elections in the states of Ohio, New York and Massachusetts resulted in a setback of the Union cause and cost "another year of war, thousands of

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of the Constitution which needed amending. The real source of the trouble was "slavery & nothing else." Everett to Holland, 9 November 1861, Everett to Sir John Coleridge, 9 July 1861, Everett to Russell, 19 August 1861, 28 May 1861, EEP, vol. 115, "Diary," 6 June 1861, EEP, vol. 180.

[48]Everett to Lady Belper, 22 June 1863, EEP, vol. 119.

precious lives, and millions of treasure."[49]

Despite Everett's desire to see the question of slavery removed from the public arena, it became apparent by August, 1862, that a presidential proclamation was forthcoming. Earlier, George Ticknor argued that abolition was essential to the restoration of peace. The slaveholding states, he told Everett, should be reduced to territories and then admitted back into the union without slavery. Everett was not enthusiastic about this plan. In fact, he seriously doubted its expediency.

> Such a course of procedure is wholly extra-constitutional, which might perhaps be justified considering the existence of Rebellion in most of the slave-holding States; - but what would be the condition of the emancipated Slaves; - what their relation to the white race: what the system on which the land in the South is to be cultivated: These are terrible questions to which as far as I know, no answer as yet been attempted.[50]

In August, Everett wrote a lengthy letter to Solmon P. Chase in which he suggested some alternatives to the planned proclamation. Perhaps he recognized the inevitable, for his earlier concern over the constitutionality of this action was dismissed. "I have <u>myself</u> no doubt of the right to terminate slavery in the rebel

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[49]Everett to R. B. Forbes, 20 October 1862, EEP, vol. 117; See also, Everett to Sidney Brooks, 29 September 1862, Everett to Charles F. Adams, 30 September 1862, EEP, vol. 117.

[50]"Diary," 21 February 1862, EEP, vol. 181; See also, Everett to R. C. Wyllie, 27 July 1863, Everett to Hiram Powers, 17 March 1862, Everett to Prince Napoleon, 4 August 1862, EEP, vols. 116, 117, 119.

states by any act of the war power." A different opinion, Everett informed Chase, was expressed by conservative elements as well as individuals in the border states. Thus, Everett proposed that some other solution be found. In his opinion, the course already being pursued by Union generals, who received into the service all slaves who choose to come, was more reasonable. This policy "is terminating slavery wherever we are able to terminate it; that is, where the union army is in force; and of what avail is it to issue orders to terminate it where we have no force to carry them into effect."[51]

Everett did express reservations about inducting and arming the freedmen. Though he admitted that enlisting them into the army might eventually prove an act of mercy toward the South, as an alternative to "guerilla warfare of the slaves against their master," he proposed that these freedmen be used as auxilliary forces. "You get out of them a vast deal of exhausting labor," he wrote, "which has got to be performed by somebody, and which they can perform better than your white soldiers. The latter, meantime, being relieved from these oppressive tasks, will have more time and heart for strictly military duty, especially in warm climates." "They would revive, in some degree the old relation of men at arms and squires to the Knights in armor."[52] By March, 1862,

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[51]Everett to Chase, 14 August 1862, EEP, vol. 117.

[52]Ibid.

Everett had totally abandoned the colonization approach. The black population in this country was far too large to make this proposal viable. Perhaps Libya could provide a place for free blacks, he thought, but since all concerned disapproved of the idea, there was no point in bringing it forward. Even with emancipation, Everett saw the great challenge which his generation would have to face. The social condition of the slave-holding states would be attended with "great suffering on the part of many individuals of the liberated race. Many years must probably elapse, before the mass of the colored population will be able to settle down as free laborers or small proprietors in the plantation states."[53]

Everett's concern for the slaves, however, was negligible. Throughout the war he continued to address himself primarily to the cause of harmony among Union elements. While emancipation did not affect his political or nationalist concepts, it did release him from the dichotomy of his public and private references to the origins and purpose of the war. Though for the most part, he continued to describe the war within the "power conspiracy" framework, slavery was no longer denied a place. In October, 1864, he articulated the position that "when the attack was made on Sumter there was not a man of reflection in the United States,

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[53]Everett to Lucien Eaton, 11 April 1864, Everett to Fillmore, 1 March 1862, EEP, vols. 116, 121.

North or South, who denied or doubted that either as motive, pretext, or rallying cry, slavery was the cause of the war."[54]

It was slavery as an institution, however, and not the slave which concerned Everett now. This institution could easily be absorbed into his conspiratorial argument. Perhaps it was Everett's intention, in designing this theory, to lay the groundwork for the reconstruction of the Union after the war. He often put forth the position that most in the South were in truth loyal to the Union, but had fallen under the yoke of and were swept into the current by "disappointed aspirants to office."[55] Therefore he attributed the existence and preservation of the slave system solely to this same power elite refusing to recognize its more significant cultural meaning. "There are but fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand persons directly interested as slave-holders," Everett argued. From the best intelligence, it was clear that "there is no sympathy between the small proprietors, and still less 'poor whites' and the rich planters." "Is it human nature that the masses of the people should carry on a ruinous war forever, to gratify

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[54]Edward Everett, "The Duty of Supporting the Government," 9 October 1864, Orations, 4:714-715.

[55]Everett, "Questions of the Day," Orations, 4:501, Everett to Charles Upton, 19 January 1864, EEP, vol. 120, Everett, "Supporting the Government," Orations, 4:720-721.

the pride, the temper, the ambition of a few political and military leaders, of the governing aristocracy to which they belong?"[56]

In light of this extensive support of the administration and his national reputation as an orator, it is hardly surprising that on September 9, 1863, Everett received a formal invitation to deliver an address at the consecration ceremony for the national cemetery at Gettysburg.[57] While Abraham Lincoln's impromptu Gettysburg address at this occasion has been enshrined as an American classic, it was Edward Everett who appeared as the major orator on November 19. For the most part, Everett's two-hour oration traced the historic events which occurred during the eventful days in July. Although he believed his most salient point was his historical allusion, demonstrating that "feuds generated by civil wars are as transient as they are bitter while they last," Lincoln was impressed with Everett's rebuttal of the notion that the general government was only an agency whose principles

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[56]Everett, "Supporting the Government," pp. 720-721; See also, Everett, "Causes of the War," Orations, 4:488-489, Edward Everett, "Agriculture," 17 July 1861, Orations, 4:436-437, 447, 448-452, Edward Everett, "National Cemetary at Gettysburg," 19 November 1863, Orations, 4:648-649, Everett to J. W. Kinnaman, 25 August 1864, Everett to John May, 13 August 1863, EEP, vols. 119, 121, 122.

[57]"Diary," 26 September 1863, EEP, vol. 182.

were the states. Lincoln thought Everett's statement was "one of the best arguments for the national supremacy," he had ever heard.[58]

It was a foregone conclusion, therefore, that in November, 1864, Everett would vote for the re-election of Abraham Lincoln. Although he had been a friend of McClellan from the start and had constantly defended him against those who sought his replacement, his over-riding concern was the war effort. "I have a great personal regard for General McClellan, and it has cost me an effort to withhold from him my support," he wrote C. G. Loring, in September, 1864. "But the times are too serious to allow us to govern our conduct by personal particularities."[59] News of McClellan's nomination by the Democratic convention prompted Everett to write, "The nomination of General McClellan as the candidate for President at the Chicago Convention is also an event of great importance. Although pledged to a vigorous prosecution of the war, till the military force of the

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[58]Everett to Adams, 5 January 1864, EEP, vol. 12. Lincoln to Everett, 20 November 1863, R.T. Lincoln Collection, Library of Congress, Everett "Gettysburg," 19 November, 4:648-649.

[59]Everett to Loring, 16 September 1864, EEP, vol. 122. For material relating to Everett's strong support for McClellan see: Everett to Wise, 14 March 1862, Everett to Lincoln, 16 June 1863, EEP, vols. 116, 119. For meeting attended of the McClellan Committee, "Diary," 20 January 1863, 6 December 1863, 9 December 1863, 30 December 1863, 2 February 1863, 5 February 1863, EEP, vol. 182.

rebellion is crushed he is nominated by a convention led by men, who are for Peace aux tout prix."[60]

In September, 1864, Everett was once again rewarded for his loyalty to his newly adopted party. This time the Republicans of Massachusetts nominated him by acclamation as a candidate-at-large for presidential elector. Perhaps this event more than any other is symbolic of the impact the war had upon Everett's life. It was only five years since he saw the Republicans as the party of extreme, power-oriented hypocrites. But the war and Everett's hostility to the chaotic situation which it bred left him one path. To Charles Steele, Everett wrote,

> I feel very sensibly the paramount importance of the pending election. On its results in my judgment depends the question whether all the treasure which has been expended and all the precious blood which has been shed in this unprovoked and wicked war waged against the life of the Nation shall have been worse than wasted as they will be if the Chicago platform is sustained by the people, I feel it to be the duty of every good citizen & good patriot to do all in his power to prevent that result.[61]

On October 19, 1864, Everett addressed a gathering at Faneuil Hall. In this oration entitled "The Duty of Supporting the Government," the only major political address included in his published orations, Everett denounced the position that support for the Democrats was necessary because the present administration had not

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[60]"Diary," 31 August 1864, EEP, vol. 183.

[61]"Diary," 14 September 1864, 16 September, EEP, vol. 183, Everett to Jas.Steele, 6 October 1864,EEP,vol.122.

only failed to win the war or make peace, but had increased the national debt as well. But Everett reminded his listeners, that in April, 1861, the government was not prepared to carry out the war vigorously and that the national debt was primarily owed to American citizens.

Everett's commitment to the party in power and its war policy was so strong that in this oration he even defended the President's policy of curtailing certain civil liberties.[62] For Everett, a vote against Lincoln was tantamount to aiding and abetting the enemy. A vote against the party in power, he said, would "paralyze an administration to which the war thus far has been conducted, ... /would/ encourage the enemy to hold the prospect of the cessation of hostilities, and greatly to augment, in this way, the danger of another campaign, to be entered upon under - much increased disadvantage, and thus incur the risk of a settlement which will render bain this mighty expense of treasure and blood."[63]

On Tuesday, November 8, 1864, the citizens of the Union went to the polls and reelected Abraham Lincoln for his second term. Everett was now seventy-one years old. He was proud that he had aided Lincoln in his victory and that he had done his duty to "our beloved & bleeding country."[64] His pride was also enhanced by

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[62]Everett, "Supporting the Government," 4:700-702,703.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Everett to Blain, 11 November 1864, EEP, vol. 122, "Diary," 25 November 1864, EEP, vol. 183.

the news that with the exception of one other, the name Edward Everett had outdrawn all candidates. The stigma of the Kansas-Nebraska crisis had finally been obliterated. The people once more showed their appreciation for the aging orator.

But Edward Everett's life was drawing to a close. In these final weeks, Everett devoted his time to the relief of those "tools of cruel and ambitious leaders," living in Savannah, Georgia. On January 9, 1865, he addressed a public meeting at Faneuil Hall calling on those attending to extend to them the "right hand of Christian love."[65] He returned to his home severely ill. "When I had got through," he wrote his daughter, "I thought I spoke but half an hour - my hands and feet were as ice, and my lungs on fire." The family doctor informed him that he had escaped a severe attack of pneumonia. On January 15, 1865, the family servant, Ruah, found him on the floor breathing heavily. Fifteen minutes later, the Boston orator was dead.[66]

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[65]Edward Everett, "Relief for Savannah," 9 January 1865, Orations, 4:759.

[66]Frothingham, Everett, p. 470.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION AND SUMMATION

Perhaps it was fitting that Edward Everett's life ended at this time. The war years had provided an environment in which national and sectional interests merged. Sectional values became national values. No longer confronted with a southern interpretation of American institutions the tensions within American nationalism were fundamentally eliminated. Edward Everett was most successful in this climate.

These last years in many ways typified the basic pattern of his life. Throughout his life the focus of his consciousness was shaped by the historical conditions. During the period from 1820 to 1824 Everett expressed the purest form of American nationalism. His experience with Europe's intense nationalist spirit in the years between 1815 and 1819 had a marked impact upon him. Not effected by the sectional questions of the day, Edward Everett as literary scholar focused on the abstract problem of national mind formation.

But the politics of sectional conflict soon engulfed this budding nationalist. Drawn into the political arena at a high point in New England's influence, Everett soon encountered the polarities of sectional interest. Throughout the period of 1825 through 1835 Everett's national consciousness weakened as he confronted the dilemma of New England's national power and status. Resolution and harmony, which Everett desired, often came through his absorbing the newer national ideal within New England values and interests. America's interests and goals became the New England Way. This especially was apparent after Everett fully recognized the political threat of western growth.

Everett's defeat as governor in 1840, his appointment as minister to England, and his absence from the country until 1845, had a great influence on the remaining years of his life. His successful stay in London as spokesman for the national interest temporarily soothed the strain on his nationalism. But the America to which Everett returned was in the process of disintegration. Even the New England life, with which Everett identified, was being threatened by a new generation of public figures emersed in the spirit of reform. Everett's painful years at Harvard, and the confusion expressed over the social transformation demonstrate that he had lost touch with the historical forces shaping the nation.

Between the period of 1848-1852 Everett tried desperately to preserve what he believed were traditional values and institutions. But his inability to understand the new national mood frustrated his efforts. Nevertheless, Everett's own political fortunes prospered. His brief tenure as Secretary of State in the closing months of the Fillmore administration proved to be his most rewarding period. The political atmosphere was ripe for his efforts and talents. Many in both parties wished to see sectionalism cooled. Everett, in his "Cuban Letter," provided a most scholarly and unimpassioned statement of American nationalism. His success at this stage reinforced his nationalism. It was clear that Everett's status in the nation was reflected in the dominance of the nationalist mood.

This strong nationalist spirit, however, proved ephemeral. Though Everett was rewarded with a senatorial seat in Congress, he was unable once again to resolve sectional antagonism within his nationalism. Unable to act decisively, Everett's political life collapsed in 1854.

For the next six years Everett sought to counter sectional polarization. His most effective tool, he believed, was to heighten national consciousness through public offerings. Yet Everett's orations and essays show how deep sectional values were ingrained in his national concepts. Though clearly, Everett was trying

to convey a national image with which men of all sections could identify the American character which he portrayed hardly reflected the realities of American life. Everett's American was Edward Everett, and he was a product of the Boston upper class.

Finally, while Everett's response to the cultural and political disruption of the nation was peculiar to his nature he did share and reflect a concern held by others. While he might not endorse the more sophisticated views of cultural transformation expressed by Hawthorne and Thoreau by 1845 he joined these men and others in the feeling that American life was deteriorating. Everett, however, did not welcome the Civil War as a cleansing force, either in the Emersonian sense-- as the triumph of radical individualism --or in the more conservative mood of a George Templeton Strong or Henry W. Bellows, who hoped the war would purge America of the fancies of democracy. Nevertheless, as the war entered its final stages Everett too saw good coming from this national catastrophy. Once slavery was abolished and the slavocracy uprooted, he believed, the true national character would emerge in the South. Even at the end Edward Everett failed to understand the forces shaping American life.

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