

HAMILTON FISH

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649598496

Hamilton Fish by A. Elwood Corning

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

A. ELWOOD CORNING

HAMILTON FISH



HAMILTON FISH

HAMILTON FISH

BY

A. ELWOOD CORNING

AUTHOR OF WILLIAM MC KINLEY, A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY;
WILL CARLETON, A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY; ETC.

With Frontispiece

UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

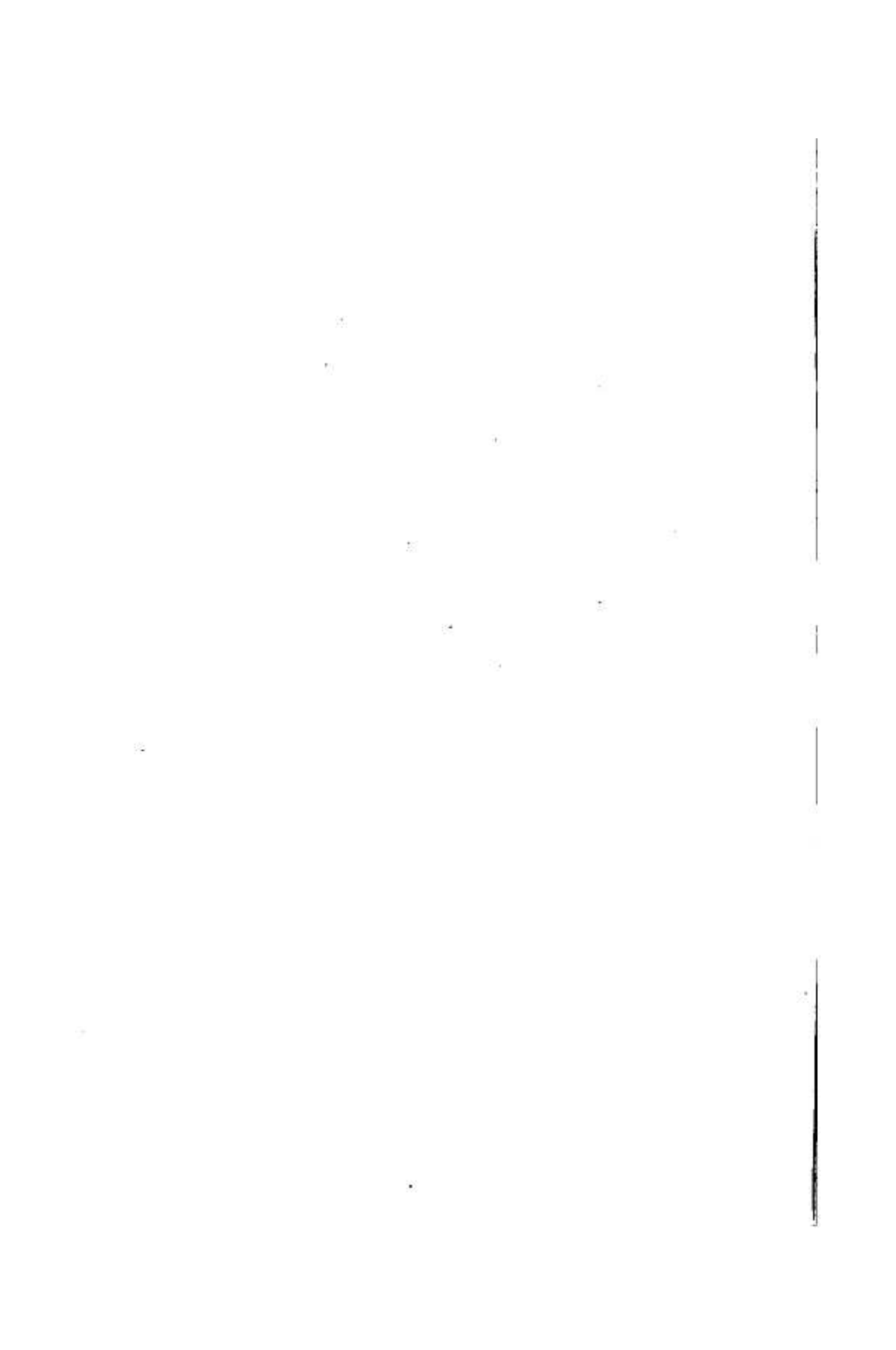
NEW YORK
THE LANMERE PUBLISHING CO.
1918

TO MY FRIEND
Captain Hamilton Fish, Jr.
THIS BRIEF MONOGRAPH
THE WRITING OF WHICH HE MADE POSSIBLE
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR

393884

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	7
I. EARLY LIFE AND BEGINNINGS IN POLITICS .	11
II. IN CONGRESS—STATE ELECTION OF 1846— LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR	23
III. GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.	30
IV. UNITED STATES SENATOR—EUROPEAN TRAVEL —PUBLIC SERVICE DURING THE WAR . .	35
V. SECRETARY OF STATE	49
VI. THE TREATY OF WASHINGTON	59
VII. THE TREATY OF WASHINGTON, continued .	75
VIII. THE CUBAN REBELLION—THE VIRGINIUS AFFAIR	85
IX. RELATIONS WITH SAN DOMINGO—THE CUR- RENCY VETO	93
X. IN RETIREMENT—MAN AND STATESMAN . .	104





INTRODUCTION

BY HONORABLE JOHN BASSETT MOORE, LL.D.

Professor of International Law and Diplomacy in Columbia University

THE author of the present sketch has asked me to contribute an introductory word. My interest in his subject has induced me to comply.

Upwards of forty years have elapsed since Hamilton Fish relinquished the post of Secretary of State, and, on the verge of his seventieth year, ended his public career. When drafted into the cabinet of Grant, it was twelve years since he had held public office. Prior to that interval, he had served as a member of the national House of Representatives; as Lieutenant-Governor, and then as Governor, of his native State; and as a Senator of the United States. He had neither extolled his own virtues, nor sought popular favor and admiration by rhetorical efforts. In the Congress he had made no speeches; and in the various official positions he occupied his activities, so far as they found formal expression in words, were recorded in grave State papers which comparatively few persons ever saw and still fewer cared to read.

Nevertheless, in his day and generation he enjoyed an exceptionally large measure of public confidence. As a trustee of ecclesiastical, educational, and benevolent institutions, to which, when not in public life, he gave much of his time and thought; as the associate and adviser of men of affairs and men of business, of men who desired sound

INTRODUCTION

and stable conditions rather than opportunities for adventure, he was held, by reason of his breadth of view, sureness of judgment and practical capacity, in the highest esteem. These respect-compelling qualities he carried into public office, where, united with a keen sense of honor and strict integrity, they enabled him to advance the general welfare and to elevate the standards of service.

In the administration of the foreign affairs of his country, he achieved his greatest usefulness. He undertook the task at a critical time, when many difficult questions were pending, and when intelligence, experience and steadiness were peculiarly requisite. Some of these questions antedated the Civil War, but others were of later origin, while the most important and most menacing of all, that of the so-called Alabama Claims, arose out of that great conflict.

In the treatment of these complications, Hamilton Fish was an opportunist only in the sense that he "took occasion by the hand." His aims were clear and definite, and were steadily pursued. His prime objective was peace with reciprocal justice. In his adherence to this noble and practical ideal, he had his official chief's full and loyal support. It is true that the particular measures he recommended were not invariably those that most strongly appealed to the President; but, as events vindicated his wisdom, Grant, who was peculiarly free from vanity and egotism, deferred to his judgment and trusted him more and more.

Fortunately, he was thus enabled to complete his work. I cannot undertake now to pass it in review. But I will say that the Treaty of Washington of May 8, 1871, for the settlement of all controversies then pending with Great Britain, stands out as the most comprehensive international