

**ADDRESSES ON THE DEATH OF HON.  
JAMES A. PEARCE, DELIVERED IN THE  
SENATE AND  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ON  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1863, PP. 3-47  
(NOT COMPLETE)**

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# **VARIOUS**

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ON

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WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE,  
1863.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

THURSDAY, February 12, 1863.

*Resolved*, That ten thousand copies of the eulogies on the life and character of the Hon. JAMES A. FRANK, delivered in the Senate and House of Representatives, be printed for the use of this House.

Attest :

EM. ETHERIDGE, *Clerk*.

ADDRESSES  
ON THE  
DEATH OF HON. JAMES A. PEARCE.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1863.

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*Address of Mr. KENNEDY, of Maryland.*

MR. PRESIDENT: The portals of the tomb have scarcely closed over a late honored associate and colleague, when again the grim messenger of death has entered this chamber and taken from its deliberations a bright and leading light, one whose long and exemplary service had secured the respect and consideration of this body; a faithful guardian of the high trusts reposed in him; always a defender of the right, an enlightened counsellor, and a wise and comprehensive statesman.

Sir, the melancholy duty has devolved on me to announce the death of my late distinguished friend and colleague, the Hon. JAMES ALFRED PEARCE, long a senator in Congress from the State of Maryland. He died at his residence in Chestertown, Kent county, on the 21st of December, 1862, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, after a long and painful illness, which kept him from his seat the greater part of the last session. For the last six months of his life he had but little alleviation from intense suffering, and but little hope of relief, save

in the repose of the silent tomb. Neither skill nor the tenderness of affection could stay the cold hand of death. In the hour of his country's greatest need, while the ruthless shock of civil war was forcing the very strongholds of its liberty; in the full vigor of a ripened intellect; in the midst of his powers for usefulness, his sun has gone down forever, and all that was mortal of that wise and trusted senator has descended to the grave.

In offering this feeble tribute of my respect and appreciation for his character and endowments I shall not intrude upon the solemn occasion any elaborate exposition of his political opinions, or lengthened eulogy upon the many excellencies of his character, but follow a sacred custom in briefly tracing the principal points and facts of his life, through a career of honorable distinction and usefulness.

Mr. PEARCE was the son of Gideon Pearce, esq., of Kent county, Maryland, but was born at the residence of his grandfather, Dr. E. C. Dick, in Alexandria, Virginia, on the 14th of December, 1805. His paternal ancestors were of Scottish origin, and came to the province of Maryland about the year 1670, and held many positions of distinction and influence from that early period in the history of our State. He manifested many of the traits of his Scottish progenitors, and in none more than the steady perseverance which marked his whole life in the attainment of high objects. This was no less shown in his earliest days than in the later periods of his life, when discharging the responsible duties of his public station. So thorough had been his preparation for college, under the tuition of an eminent



master at Alexandria, and so great was his aptness and application, that he entered Princeton College at a period when most boys are just beginning the higher studies of an academic course. He was admitted to his first degree at the early age of seventeen, having graduated with the highest honors of his class, which comprised many names since distinguished in the various departments of science and learning throughout the country. Subsequently he studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1824.

After this he resided a short period in Louisiana, but returning to Maryland he was elected to a seat in the House of Delegates of that State in 1831. Though too young and modest to assume a leading part, it was the commencement of a political career such as few attain to, and such as any might well be proud of. In 1835 he was elected to represent his district in Congress, and re-elected for a second term, ending in 1839. For the succeeding Congress he was defeated by Hon. Philip Francis Thomas, afterward governor of the State—but was again returned in 1841, and served until 1843. During this period he acquired much reputation by his general course in the popular branch of Congress, but especially by his report on the question of refunding the fine imposed upon General Jackson. This brought him so prominently before the people of his State that he was elected that year (1843) to a seat in the Senate of the United States, to succeed Hon. John Leeds Kerr. From that date he was successively re-elected in 1849, 1854, and 1861; his term consequently would not have expired until 1867—thus having given to his country, in

the national councils, twenty-five years of service to its best interests, never charged with the reproach of narrow partisanship or sectional motives, but at all times acting under the influence of a broad and comprehensive American statesmanship.

Mr. President, it may be a fact worthy of recording in this hasty sketch of my late colleague, that he never was defeated in any contest for public station or preferment, by the people or legislature of his State, from the first struggle for the honors of his college class, down to his last re-election to this body, with the exception of one term in the House of Representatives, which I have already named.

This is the summary of the public service of Mr. PEARCE; and however prominent it may stand out, he yet was marked in other spheres of life. Notwithstanding the duties of his public position, which he faithfully discharged, he was never neglectful of the practice of his profession, in which he held high rank, and was eminently successful. He was Professor of Law in Washington College, at Chestertown. He was further honored with the degree of Doctor of Laws, conferred upon him by the College of St. James, in Maryland, and also by his ancient Alma Mater, the college of Princeton. His qualifications for high judicial station were so well esteemed that he was offered, at one time, a seat on the bench of the United States district court for the State of Maryland. He was afterwards, during the same presidential term of Mr. Fillmore, nominated and confirmed by the Senate as Secretary of the Interior, which distinguished mark of appreciation he also declined, pre-

ferring to remain in the Senate, where his sphere of usefulness was more extended, and more in consonance with his tastes and studies. As a friend of science and the promotion of knowledge, he was appointed a regent of the Smithsonian Institute shortly after its establishment, which post he held to the day of his death. For seventeen years of his service in the Senate he was at the head of the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress, and, by his scholarly tastes and discriminating judgment, has contributed much to its present enlarged condition of usefulness.

Mr. PEARCE was a man of varied tastes and acquirements, combining in a greater degree, perhaps, than almost any public man of his times, the learning of the statesman and jurist with that of the accomplished scholar. He was fond of paintings and music; was gifted with a fine voice, with which at times he charmed the social circle, as he always did by the finished style of his conversation. He was much given to the pursuits of agriculture, and took a deep interest in all that pertained to its scientific advancement. He cultivated with great success fruits and flowers. Indeed, so general was his information, so cultivated was his intellect, and so thoroughly national and broad were his political views, that his reputation was not long confined to the limits of his State, but attracted such consideration among the galaxy of distinguished men who grew up with the whig party, that upon more than one occasion his name was publicly canvassed in connexion with the presidency of the United States. In politics Mr. PEARCE had always been a leading and prominent member of the