

**WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICAN
STATESMEN: A COLLECTION
FROM VARIOUS SOURCES
CLASSIFIED UNDER APPROPRIATE
SUBJECT HEADINGS**

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Wit and Humor of American Statesmen: A Collection from Various Sources Classified under
Appropriate Subject Headings by Henry Frederic Reddall

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HENRY FREDERIC REDDALL

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*Wit and Humor of
American Statesmen*



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Preface

If that man is blessed who causes two blades of grass to sprout where but one grew before, then surely those of our public men who, aside from their labors for the common weal, contribute to the gayety of nations are to be doubly commended. In this volume are garnered and classified some of the many bright sayings perpetrated on the stump, in legislature and primary, in the halls of Congress—enlivening many a prosy and protracted debate—or wherever men of opposite political creeds meet and make the sparks of wit fly and scintillate.

Probably in no other country does politics enter so largely and so intimately into the daily life of the people as in the United States, and nowhere else is the search-light of celebrity turned so relentlessly upon our public men, be they merely politicians or those who have graduated by sheer force of intellect into the higher rank of statesmen. Their clever sayings and pungent witticisms are chronicled and chuckled

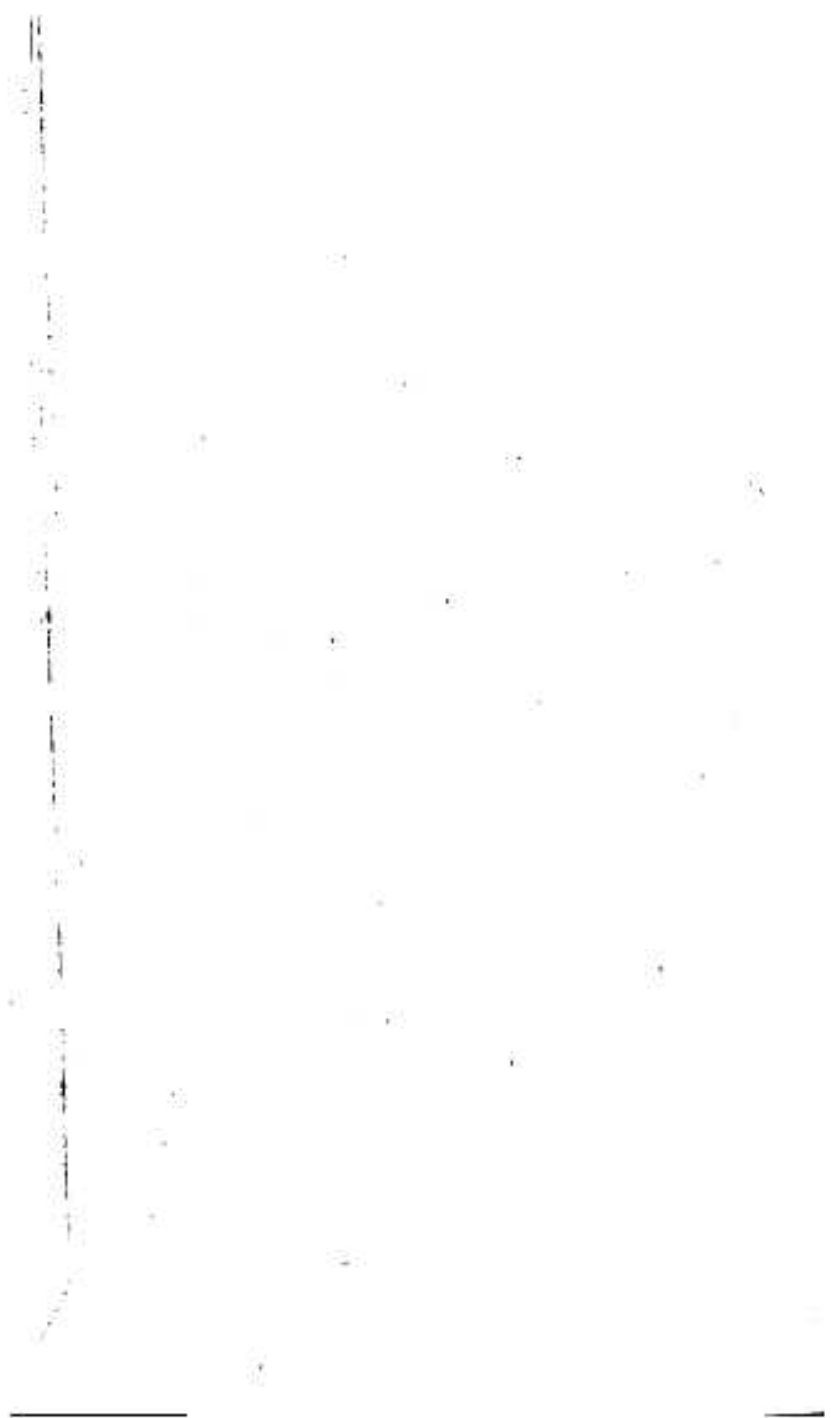
over from the Lakes to the Gulf, from the St. Lawrence to the Rio Grande.

Consequently the hope may be ventured that a permanent collection of these good things may find a welcoming audience and evoke a reasonable amount of appreciative mirth.

Besides the witticisms of statesmen and politicians embraced in this volume, it has been thought well to include humorous sayings of farmers, negroes and others pertaining to politics; for not all the witty remarks and bright bits of repartee have originated in legislative halls or among our political leaders.

Contents

CHAP.	PAGE
I. ON THE STUMP	7
II. NEW STORIES OF LINCOLN	28
III. OFFICE-SEEKING AS A FINE ART	52
IV. HAYSEED POLITICS	65
V. JACKSONIANA	83
VI. WHERE WOMAN APPEARS	89
VII. THE RETORT COURTEOUS	109
VIII. MISTAKEN IDENTITY	129
IX. "THE SAGE OF MARSHFIELD," (Daniel Webster)	140
X. "WAY DOWN SOUTH"	147
XI. BENTON AND DOUGLAS AND THEIR COLLEAGUES	160
XII. LOBBY AND CLOAK-ROOM YARNS	169
XIII. GREELEYANA	183
XIV. "THE MAN IN POSSESSION"	190
XV. SENATORIAL COURTESY	200
XVI. SOME REED ANECDOTES	213
XVII. WAYS AND MEANS	218



Wit and Humor of American Statesmen

CHAPTER I

On the Stump

ONE of the strongest campaigners ever in the West was ex-Senator Saunders, of Montana. The Democrats were always predicting defeat for him, but Saunders would always bob up serenely on the night of election with enough votes to win; on one occasion, however, they really polled enough votes to defeat Saunders. There was a grand ratification meeting, with brass bands and bonfires, to celebrate the defeat of the hitherto invincible champion of Republicanism, and there was a hullabaloo that woke the echoes for miles around. Just as the speaking was under way who should happen along but Saunders himself. Immediately a number of Democrats surrounded him, and, as those things are done out West, urged him to make a speech to the crowd.

Saunders objected at first, but such strong persuasion was used that he ultimately yielded and climbed up on the platform. Of course the meeting went wild on seeing him, but as soon as he stepped forward and opened his lips a hush of respectful silence fell upon the assemblage.

"Fellow-citizens and Democrats," he began in a ringing voice, "this is not my time to ratify and celebrate. This entire occasion to me has a peculiar, funereal aspect. However, I must say to you Democrats you have been honest with me." A wave of applause swept over the assemblage. "Many of your leading men came to me during the campaign and prophesied my defeat. (Applause.) They said so sure was it that I had no chance of election that they could beat me with a yellow dog." (Applause, and several voices in the audience hurrahed.) Saunders paused until the noise subsided, and then added: "By the gods, they've done it!"

* * * * *

There is such a thing as being too anxious, as witness the following remark:

"Yes," said the statesman, "I defeated myself by my own eloquence once."

"How was that?"