

Railroad had been defeated in 1854; but in 1856 Congress made a most generous grant to the State, to be donated by the legislature to such railroads as should be selected. An extra session was held in the fall of the year to dispose of this grant, when the wholesale bribery of the governor and legislature by the late Byron Kilbourn occurred. For some reason, Speaker Hull was not approached at such a time, or in such a way, as he supposed his position required, and he was intensely indignant. He stormed through the corridors of the old capitol, swinging over his head a paper which he said was a list of the members bribed, and a crowd hostile to the proposed scheme to dispose of the grant followed him around to get the names. Notably Major H. A. Tenney urged that the list be given to him. But there was a method in his madness; and the tempestuous scene soon subsided. He finally voted with the Kilbourn crowd, and when the following year, investigation came, he was found to have been among the largest beneficiaries in the distribution of the "corruption bonds" as they were called.

Mr. Hull was an acquaintance in his youth of the late Sergeant S. Prentiss, the famous Mississippi orator, and was fond of describing scenes in which he figured, and reciting snatches of his wonderful eloquence. He used to relate, with intense spirit, a scene where Prentiss had been very lucky at the gambling table, and as the two emerged from the room, the night being brilliant with star-light, Prentiss said: "Why, Mr. Hull, what luck I have had. I believe, sir," looking upward at the spangled sky, "that, had I been playing with the Almighty, star for star, I should have won them all, and left the world in darkness before morning."

Mr. Hull was a most generous man, faithful in friendship, frank, ardent and full of kindly sentiments. On removing to La Crosse, in 1858, he became attorney for the packet lines on the Mississippi, and rarely appeared in any public capacity outside of his profession. He was a delegate two or three times in Democratic State conventions, notably in that held in this city in 1872, to ratify the choice of Horace Greeley as a candidate for the presidency. He was, though ultra-Southern in his views, a great admirer of Mr. Greeley, and was enthusiastic in his support.