

constitution was peculiarly distinguished by strength, vigor and breadth. He was an intellectual athlete. His mind was clear, forcible, logical and original. He was quick of apprehension, and yet, his conclusions were always the result of logical deduction, and, being thoroughly honest, nothing could shake the foundations of his stability, when he had once settled the truthfulness of his convictions. He was a great reader, possessed a powerful memory, and the thoroughly healthy stomach of his strong mind readily digested what he had read. He was a rare conversationalist; indeed, few could match him in this particular. His fund of anecdote and illustration was almost inexhaustible, and these were always so apt, that they added great force and poignancy to his conclusions. Once, when arguing the proposition that certain things were more probable than others, he quoted from the charge of the Vermont judge, who told the jury that it would naturally require more proof to convince them that a sheep had rooted up a door-yard, than that a hog had done so. At another time speaking of the changes which the lapse of years had made in the advancement of liberality in religion, he referred to the old time minister who arose in the pulpit and said, with solemn satisfaction: "I flatter myself that nine-tenths of my respected congregation are to be ultimately damned."

During the latter years of his life, Judge Vilas occupied considerable of his leisure time in reading and studying the Bible, and it was decidedly interesting to hear him converse upon the subject. His quick apprehension, and keen appreciation of the beautiful in art or literature, enabled him to find striking passages, which would have escaped the attention of the ordinary reader.

Judge Vilas made a mistake when he quit the actual business of his profession at so early an age. He, himself, often regretted this step. His mind was too active, his talents too bright, and his faculties too vigorous and robust, to be contented with the pleasures of mere ease. A powerful intellect, long exercised and trained in the fields of mental labor, suddenly cut off from all its accustomed employment, falls back on itself, and is too apt to feed on, and consume, its own happiness.