

bers of the bar, and regarded his word as sacred as the most solemn written stipulation. In a trial, however, he was a most formidable antagonist, and dealt the heaviest blows. It was in the court room and before a jury that he felt most at home, and appeared to best advantage as an orator. Here he acquired his earliest and highest reputation, and his fame as a lawyer will rest upon his great power as an advocate, rather than upon the learning and ability he displayed as a jurist.

The great advocate seldom leaves in his written speeches any fitting monument of his life-work. The eloquence of his tongue, and the effect it has produced in controlling the actions of men, lives only in tradition. This is especially true of Gen. Smith, who seldom committed his speeches to writing either before or after delivery. His ability as an orator may safely rest upon the solid reputation acquired at the bar and maintained for more than a quarter of a century. During that period, however, he also discussed with great force and ability every question of a political or social character that agitated the public. Such of his speeches and addresses as have been published, have been received with great favor even by the most critical; but those that have heard him most frequently will concur in the statement, that his best efforts can never be reproduced on paper. It was his fine presence, his quick and accurate perception, his perfect self-reliance and his native eloquence, that gave Gen. Smith his great power over the jury as well as the popular audience. His style and manner were forcible, yet pleasing and persuasive. He grasped the main points in his argument tenaciously, and never lost sight of them; but his speeches were seldom finished in matters of detail. He was not logical in little things. In minor matters some of his utterances might appear inconsistent, even contradictory at times, but the great controlling ideas of the speech were always in exact harmony. But what was lacking in completeness and polish of style was more than compensated for by the force and eloquence of Gen. Smith's oratory. His power over an audience was wonderful, and it had its secret spring in his own masterly self-command. Though he addressed multitudes of excited men in the most turbulent times, he was never carried away by the crowd.