

RICHARD OLNEY DIES; VETERAN STATESMAN

Attorney General and Secretary
of State in Cleveland's Second
Term Expires in Boston at 81.

UPHELD MONROE DOCTRINE

His Demand Upon Great Britain Led
to Her Arbitration of the Vene-
zuelan Boundary Dispute.

BOSTON, April 9.—Richard Olney, Attorney General and Secretary of State in Cleveland's second Cabinet, died at his home here last night. He was in his eighty-second year and had been ill for several weeks, though it was not until yesterday that his condition became serious. With him when he died were Mrs. Olney and their daughter Mrs. George R. Minot of this city. Mrs. C. H. Abbot, their other daughter, is in Paris.

Although Richard Olney occupied the office of Secretary of State for only one year and nine months, his name will go down in history as one of the greatest Secretaries that ever held the portfolio of the State Department. He will perhaps best be remembered for his handling of the question of the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela. His methods were those of a strong and well-equipped lawyer rather than of the politician, and he gained reputation in his office by his intellectual strength and sturdy purpose.

Disregarding the warning that a rigid maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine might plunge this country into war with Great Britain, President Cleveland and Secretary Olney successfully insisted upon the arbitration of the boundary dispute between the empire and Venezuela. The Secretary of State, in a famous message sent through Ambassador Bayard to Lord Salisbury, said:

"Great Britain both admits that there is a controversy and that arbitration should be resorted to for its adjustment. But while up to that point her attitude leaves nothing to be desired, its practical effect is completely nullified by her insistence that the submission shall cover but a part of the controversy; that as a condition of arbitrating her right to a part of the disputed territory the remainder shall be turned over to her. Upon that principle—except her feebleness as a nation—is Venezuela to be denied the right of having her claim heard and passed upon by an impartial tribunal? 'It is so because I will have it so,' seems to be the impartial justification Great Britain offers."

At first Lord Salisbury refused to submit to the American demand, but this Government remained firm, and he receded and agreed to submit the entire question to arbitration.

His Settlement of Mora Claim.

Another act of Mr. Olney while Secretary of State was the settlement and collection from Spain of the Mora claim, in which many Administrations had been unsuccessful. He negotiated with Great Britain an arbitration treaty for the settlement of future disputes between the two countries. This, however, was afterward defeated by the United States Senate.

Mr. Olney was appointed Attorney General by President Cleveland in 1893, and he served two years and three months before he was called to the State Department to succeed Walter Q. Gresham as Secretary. It was Mr. Olney who, during the Debs railroad strike in Chicago, counseled the calling out of the Federal troops. He defended that action successfully in an argument before the Supreme Court. He bent his energies upon asserting that the law of the United States was supreme throughout the entire country and that the interests of no section must be prejudicial by interference with the free use of the railroads in the carrying of the mails or with the enjoyment of interstate commerce.

He was not, however, hostile to labor unions, and this is shown by his letter to the United States Circuit Court in Philadelphia in 1894 in relation to a petition of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen asking for relief against the receivers of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, who threatened to discharge all members of the brotherhood unless within a specified time they resigned from the organization. He upheld the right of labor to organize, and added: "No better mode for the settlement of contests between labor and capital has yet been devised or tried than arbitration." In 1895 Mr. Olney, at the request of the Chairman of the Committee of Labor of the House of Representatives, examined into labor conditions, and he gave valuable suggestions, indorsing the principles of mediation and arbitration, and he drafted the bill dealing with labor matters that was passed by the House in February, 1895.

Introduced by Cleveland.

It was Grover Cleveland who first introduced Richard Olney to the American people. Mr. Cleveland's estate at Buzzards Bay was only a few miles from the country estate of Mr. Olney, at Falmouth, and it was during the campaign preceding Cleveland's second Administration that the two men met. Both were hard-and-fast Democrats and both were enthusiastic fishermen. Mr. Olney was then so little known outside his own State that when his selection as Attorney General was announced one of the biggest politicians in Washington asked, "Who is Olney?"

Richard Olney was born in Oxford, Mass., on Sept. 15, 1835, the son of Wilson Olney, a textile manufacturer and banker. Shortly after his birth his father moved to Louisville, Ky., and there the boy grew up until his seventh year, when the family moved back to Oxford. Young Olney was sent to the Leicester (Mass.) Academy, and, after completing his course there, he went to Brown University, where he was graduated with high honors, being class orator, in 1856. He went directly to the Harvard Law School, and two years later received his degree of Bachelor of Laws. He was admitted to the bar in 1859. He became associated with the late Judge Benjamin Franklin Thomas. He soon made a name for himself and won high place as an authority on matters of probate, trust, and corporation law.

The "Silent Statesman."

He was always a Democrat, and afterward, when he became a power in politics, he was sometimes referred to as the "Silent Statesman." His political life began when he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1874. He served one term and would not accept a renomination. In 1876 he was the Democratic candidate for Attorney General of his State. He gave himself up to the private practice of law for the next twenty years. He was more than once offered an appointment as Supreme Court Justice of the State, but he declined the honor, and the next public office he held was the Attorney Generalship under President Cleveland. He was the choice of the Democrats in the Massachusetts Legislature for United States Senator in 1901.

When, in 1904, he permitted the presentation of his name to the Democratic National Convention as a candidate for the Presidential nomination he received thirty-eight votes, including the solid support of the Massachusetts delegation. Upon retiring from official life in 1897 Mr. Olney resumed the practice of the law in Boston. He had since occasionally published articles and delivered addresses upon public questions. He delivered a striking address in 1898 at Harvard on "International Isolation of the United States," and in 1900 he published a clear and strong article upon "Growth of Our Foreign Policy." In the campaign of 1900 Mr. Olney advocated the election of Mr. Bryan. In 1906 Mr. Olney was the leader of the policyholders in their fight against the New York and the Mutual Life Insurance companies. He was named as one of the Trustees of the Mill trust under the will of Horatio H. Slater of Webster, Mass.

Offered Ambassadorship.

President Wilson in 1913 offered Mr. Olney the post of Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, but he refused it

because of Mrs. Olney's health and his disinclination to re-enter public life at his time of life. Mr. Olney was always interested in public matters, and he was active in the repeal of the "free tolls" provision of the Panama Canal act. He took an active part in Mr. Wilson's second campaign.

In May, 1914, President Wilson offered him the appointment as Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, but he declined it, because it would have required his entire time. His public utterances always commanded thoughtful attention and attracted widespread comment. His counsels were eagerly sought and listened to by the members of the Democratic Party.

Mrs. Olney was Miss Agnes P. Thomas of Boston, whom he married in 1861. Mr. Olney received the honorary degree of LL. D. from Harvard and from Brown in 1893 and from Yale in 1901. He was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Philosophical Society, and a former Regent of the Smithsonian Institution.