

their debt to the nation by wise and faithful captaincy. There are many perplexities in productive and distributive economy, in governmental reform, largely created by advances in applied science itself. For their solution, trained ability, backed by abundant means, is demanded. Better than a Board for such tasks may be an Individual Man, and no better prototype of him has appeared in this country than John Stevens, or his son, Robert Livingston Stevens, whom we are now to know.

John Stevens was born in the city of New York in 1749. His grandfather came to New York early in the eighteenth century as a law officer of the British Crown, and afterward resided in Perth Amboy, then the principal town in Eastern New Jersey. John Stevens, a son of this Englishman, rose to distinction in public service. At Princeton he was vice-president of the Council convened on August 27, 1776, by the first Legislature of New Jersey. So well did he serve that he was chosen to preside over the Council of Eastern New Jersey proprietors. Next he was elected a Member of Congress for New Jersey, and president of the State Convention, which met on December 11, 1787, to consider the National Constitution, duly adopted eleven days thereafter by New Jersey, as the third commonwealth to do so. He was the delegate from his State to present this ratification to Congress. Here, plainly, was a man cast in a large mold,—an administrator of acknowledged power, the first among equals to lay foundations broad and deep for his State and his country. In the home of this man questions as wide as America were discussed day by day, with hope for happy issues, with courage for whatever might befall. He was, moreover, a man of ample fortune, so that the talents of his children had generous and timely tilth, bringing to their best estate a fiber at once refined and strong.

John Stevens took to wife Mary Alexander, of as good blood as himself. She was a daughter of the Honorable