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SOUTHERN HERO TALES

SAMUEL H. THOMPSON



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GLOBE BOOK COMPANY



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LOS ANGELES

To
Eugenie L. Ruff
my Valparaiso School
friend, With the
Author's Compliments.

Samuel H. Thompson

1924.



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SOUTHERN HERO TALES

BY
SAMUEL H. THOMPSON



GLOBE BOOK COMPANY
MORRISTOWN, TENN.

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DEDICATION

To the hero-loving spirit of the high-
hearted boys and pure-
hearted girls
of the
GREAT NEW SOUTH
this little volume of stories about men who
helped in the making of our nation
is lovingly dedicated by
THE AUTHOR.

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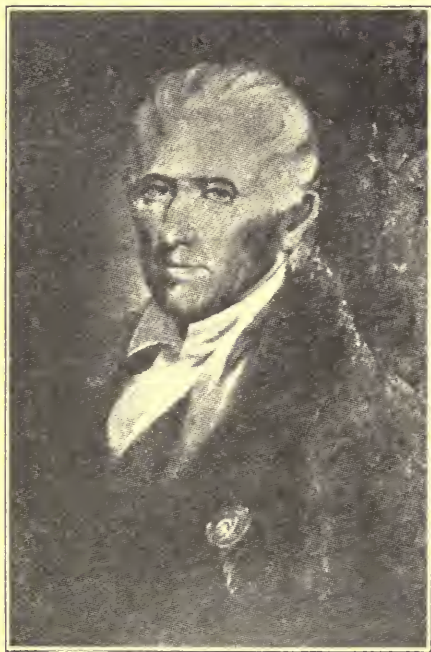


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DANIEL BOONE, STATESMAN AND POET

A long time ago there lived among the beautiful hills and mountains of our Southern country a man whose fame as a hunter and trapper is told over and over again



DANIEL BOONE

to our boys and girls. In speaking of his great prowess as a hunter, which was made necessary by the wild and lonely life he lived, we often forget that Daniel Boone

was more than all these, and lose sight of the fact that he was a statesman and a poet as well as a great pioneer backwoodsman. From comparatively old parts of the country, as he counted age, Boone led victorious parties in search of new homes into a land that indeed flowed with milk and honey. No man could do so many successful things for the people he loved and served who did not have back of him good parents and in his heart and mind an ambition for the higher things of life that filled his soul full of an endless longing to be of great service to the teeming world of humanity.

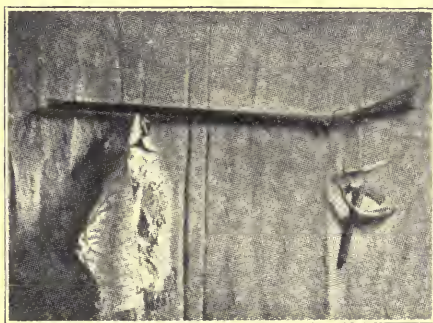
Boone's father and mother were both Quakers, the father having come direct from England to join Penn's colony and become free from the persecution given followers of that sect in England. His father is described as "a man of rather small stature, fair complexion, red hair, and gray eyes;" while his mother was "a woman something over the common size, strong and active, with black hair and eyes."

Daniel was the sixth child born to Squire and Sarah (Morgan) Boone, resulting from the marriage in the Quaker meetinghouse by the Quaker ceremony on July 23, 1720—lacking but a day of being exactly one month after John Wesley entered Oxford College. It seemed in-

evitable that this boy should be a great hunter. His first playthings were guns, powder horns, and hunting knives. Early in life he became skilled in throwing the knob-rooted sapling and capturing smaller game with his hands. At the age of twelve his father gave him a light rifle, which was a delight and a pleasure. He now became a man in his own thought. He soon became known for his markmanship and for his prowess in search of big game. In his seventeenth year his family departed for North Carolina, Squire Boone and son, Israel, having been "disowned" by the Quakers—just why, no one seems to know—although no one regards this as the reason for the departure. The family settled in the valley of the Yadkin River, in Davie County, and soon became leaders in their community, whose citizens were miles apart. When the French and Indian war broke out, Boone joined the side of the English, but was forced to go as a wagoner and mechanic when he wanted to go as a rifleman. His grandfather was a blacksmith, and it is supposed that Boone had learned the trade; but in time of war to be a wagoner was as Pegasus to the plow to him.

In this war Boone met a man named John Findley, who related to him a glowing account of a remote coun-

try south of the Ohio River, where the hunting was the best in the world. This, of course, interested the young mountaineer more than anything else, and he was soon making trips of his own accord into this new land. The Indians called this wonderful country "Kentucky," and preserved it as a hunting ground nominally open to all, but about which there was to be much dark and bloody



RELICS OF DANIEL BOONE

fighting among whites and Indians almost alike for the possession of a choice bit of land.

But with all his warrior spirit, Daniel Boone was not without his romantic characteristics. Near his home in the Yadkin valley lived a high-spirited Scotch-Irish family named Bryan. Black-eyed, rosy-cheeked Rebecca Bryan made a conquest of the strong-limbed boy from the start. She was but fifteen when they plighted their

troth, and but seventeen when they were married by Squire Boone, who was a justice of the peace.

In the dark days on the border Boone found himself of great service to the settlers, especially to those who found it necessary to organize themselves into small parties and go against Indian marauders, or even carry the expedition far into the Indian's country, as was often necessary. He was skilled in all the ways of fighting the dangerous red man, and also of caring for himself and those dependent upon his leadership. As travel became less dangerous or as the fertile lands far away became more attractive, Boone was relied upon to lead not only parties of hunters and trappers into new and dangerous, though attractive, regions, but he guided caravans consisting of several families who expected to make for themselves and theirs permanent homes in the new land. The old Boone trail led out of North Carolina across Eastern Tennessee and into Kentucky. Boone was doubtless the first white man to make a permanent trail through Tennessee, which he did as early as 1759 or 1760. The writer has seen the following inscription upon a beech tree standing in sight of the old stage road leading from Jonesboro to Blountville in Tennessee:

is, "a dead politician." My definition for a statesman is one who does constructive work with a vision and an insight justified by time. Such was Daniel Boone, and



DANIEL BOONE'S TREE

as such must he live in history. Some have thought him a hermit-like mountaineer because tradition says when he found a neighbor as close as fifteen miles he immediately penetrated farther into the forest. Both are

doubtless true in that he led others with him that they, too, might share in the abundant game, new fertile soil, and pure streams of crystal water. He was a pathfinder in the sense that he blazed the way where none dared precede him and only few were brave enough to follow. When he left his home in the rich and peaceful valley of the Yadkin with his lovely black-eyed Rebecca, charming as a Jewess, and their infant son, James, it was only that he might show other families that they could brave the dangers of the unknown forest and survive. When he went into what is now Tennessee less than a dozen years after the first white man set foot on her soil and nine years before the first home was established, it was only that new territory might be opened for those seeking homes where fresh soil and uncut timber were to be found in abundance. Through it all he looked with the eye of a statesman, and every vision thrilled him with the inspiration of a poet whose untaught and unlettered mind could not set its poetic fancy to words. He did know more about Transylvania than any man, and it was because he saw it all, and not merely the animal trails, the virgin timber, the fine springs, and the unending soil, but he saw them all in one out of eyes that looked from a statesman's mind. Very few people know that as early

as 1765 Boone penetrated as far south as Florida by way of Tennessee, Western Virginia, and Kentucky. But he did. He almost made up his mind to settle at Pensacola, but that beautiful, rosy-cheeked, thrifty Scotch wife dissuaded him, and he was saved to become the great pilot of the no less and no greater wilderness. He often left his wife and children for months that he might find new territory, but it was not that he loved them less. Rather he felt that he must do the work his soul bade him do. While he had a fondness for the untrammelled life of the forest, he was also devoted to his family and felt that he could do much better for them by making explorations into a new country and inducing settlers to remove hither. The trend was westward, following the Indian wars, and in this great movement he had no desire to be a laggard. For all that Boone had he suffered much. While in captivity by the Indians he was in imminent danger of death many times. His firstborn, James, was slain at the early age of seventeen in an Indian massacre. When he led the party of men who built the "Wilderness Road," it was at the risk of his life daily, but he saw a great territory opening to humanity and for the benefit of mankind. It was his nerve that kept the road going. After two deaths from an Indian

attack, many begged Boone to return before others met a similar fate. But he would not. Quoting from "Daniel Boone and the Wilderness Road," by H. A. Bruce, from which much information herein is gleaned, we have the following from Felix Walker's (one of the company) comment on Boone's management of the expedition:

"In the sequel and conclusion of my narrative I must not neglect to give honor to whom honor is due. Colonel Boone conducted the company under his care through the wilderness with great propriety, intrepidity, and courage; and were I to enter an exception to any part of his conduct, it would be on the ground that he appeared void of fear and of consequences—too little caution for the enterprise. But let me with feeling, recollection, and lasting gratitude ever remember the unremitting kindness, sympathy, and attention paid to me by Colonel Boone in my distress. He was my father, my physician, and friend; he attended me as his child, cured my wounds by the use of medicines from the woods, nursed me with paternal affection until I recovered, without the expectation of reward."

I have also said that Boone was a poet. That you may be satisfied, let me give here his words on some occasions as handed down to us by those who were with him and

who have come after them. When he visited the Tennessee country in 1764, he is reported to have cried, while gazing from a Cumberland Mountain peak at a herd of buffalo grazing below: "I am richer than the man mentioned in scripture who owned the cattle on a thousand hills; I own the wild beasts of more than a thousand valleys." Then as they went into the Kentucky regions he spoke in a rhapsody of enthusiasm: "One day I undertook a tour through the country, and the diversity and beauties of nature I met with . . . expelled every gloomy and vexatious thought. Just at the close of day the gentle gales retired and left the place to the disposal of a profound calm. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge and, looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tracts below. On the other hand I surveyed the famous river Ohio that rolled in silent dignity, marking the western boundary of Kentucky with inconceivable grandeur. At a vast distance I beheld the mountains lift their venerable brows and penetrate the clouds."

That he was lonely and often sighed for the pleasures of his own fireside is revealed in the following words spoken to one Filson: "I confess I never before was

under greater necessity of exercising philosophy and fortitude. A few days I passed uncomfortably. The idea of a beloved wife and family, and their anxiety upon the account of my absence and exposed situation, made sensible impressions on my heart. A thousand dreadful apprehensions presented themselves to my view, and had undoubtedly disposed me to melancholy if further indulged.”

Boone had an indomitable will and was a strong lover of nature. It was now Maytime in the beautiful Kentucky woods and he became reconciled.

If further proof were needed of his being a statesman and a poet, let me say that no man could lead the men he led in such an inspirational and enthusiastic way without having the qualities of both. When his life went out in the eighty-sixth year of his age in the second decade of the nineteenth century, his spirit did not depart, but remained as a beacon-light to others who desired to build roads through the wilderness of the far West and elsewhere. Whole pages could be written about Boone as a lawmaker. But they must be left for another time.

ALWAYS A WINNER

You and I know a great many people who are very attractive to us and whom we like very much. Some of them are handsome and rich and what the world calls successful; others are lacking in the finer qualities that



JOHN SEVIER

The First Governor of Tennessee

make for fame and fortune and success, yet we like them very much, too.

I am going to tell you a little about a great man who always won. But it was not always easy for him. Now and then he was near losing, and at times, no doubt,

was in the act of giving up. The fact that he never did give up caused him to win.

This hero of mine was born in old Virginia not many years after the birth of "The Father of His Country." As a boy he loved the folklore stories of his surroundings in much the same way that you and I love fairy stories, the myths of Greece and Rome, the Siegfried stories of the Irish sagas; only he did not read them in books as we do, but had them told to him by his parents and old people who lived near him. They were hero stories of what men had done with animals and fish and in fighting the dangerous red men of that time. Moreover, many of them were thrilling stories of real Indians, or red men, and they fired the blood of this handsome boy until he wanted to go out and do some great thing; only as he grew older he became ambitious to fight that he might do good instead of just for fame and fortune and the high honor that success would bring.

Our boy went into a new country which is now Tennessee. He met many people who had come into these old mountains—old to the world of mountains, but new to the world of men and women. The new people with whom he became acquainted had come from other sections of the country to find more room and larger fields

for their flocks and herds and also to establish homes for their children. Some of them had come because they had been driven out of their former homes by the soldiers of the King of England, who was at that time in possession of all this country by right of discovery and force, but not altogether by right of law. They came seeking liberty and freedom and opportunity. The great mountains seemed to breathe into them the spirit of liberty and freedom and independence. The running streams sang a song of freedom; the hills took up the echo until every inhabitant made it the great battle cry. The scenery is not unlike that in Scotland which gave such inspiration to Wallace and Bruce and of which Sir Walter Scott wrote with such charming interest in *The Lady of the Lake*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and kindred stories. No man could live among such surroundings and not have the spirit of freedom.

One day they brought the news that the Indians were planning an attack on a fort occupied by the white people, who had gathered therein for protection. There was much alarm, and all turned to the handsome young Virginian for leadership. Some women were outside the barracks milking when the shrewd and fearless Indians sought to take the fort. Among these women was a

young and beautiful girl afterwards known to lovers of historical romance as "Bonny Kate" Sherrill. And she was every whit as attractive as the fair Eleanor in *The Lady of the Lake*. The Indian braves seemed to have her in their cruel grasp. But when all appeared to be lost, our young friend leaped to the top of the barricade and rescued her from almost instant death. He was the James Fitz-James of the fine pastoral by Scotland's great bard. This one act of our hero placed him high in the estimation of those who love the brave and the good and the noble. You are not surprised that soon "Bonny Kate" became his fair and blushing bride, and that thereafter she shared his life of adventure and hardship, to which were added many of his country's highest honors, not the least of which was being six times governor of a great State, being the first man thus honored by the people of that commonwealth.

Doubtless John Sevier (for it is he of whom I write) did not count being governor of Tennessee the highest honor, although any man might count that honor enough. But our hero was a man who counted honor that which gave him opportunity for the greatest service.

A long time after the saving of "Bonny Kate," as boys and girls count time, there came an opportunity for great

service of which our handsome gentleman took advantage. He was ambitious and energetic, but only that he might bring happiness to others and himself as well.

The folks in this wild mountain country were threatened on every side by the king's soldiers, who stood afar and sent word that they would cross the mountains to molest the peace and quiet of the comfortable cabin homes nestling snugly in the valleys and on the hilltops of this now famous land which so many call home. Word was brought by a paroled prisoner named Samuel Philips that unless these mountain people laid down their arms the British officer, Patrick Ferguson, would march into their country, lay waste their crops, burn their houses, and hang their leaders. Now what would you expect a brave and fearless leader to do when such a message was sent his people? Like the Greeks and Romans of ancient times, he answered by going in person at the head of a small number of men who were not only used to living in the open and enduring the hardships of a rugged mountain life, but who knew how to shoot as well, for they captured meat for themselves and families in that way. They could kill a squirrel out of the top of the highest tree you ever saw, or shoot a deer running as rapidly as the fastest horse. What could

such fine marksmen do in time of battle? Moreover, they were helped in their high endeavor by the thought that if they won it meant freedom forever for them and their children, but if they lost it meant long, long years of struggle, with the results uncertain.

So when this word reached John Sevier and other brave "over-the-mountain" men, he began to collect these old squirrel and bear and deer hunters for a long march over the mountains to make a last defense of their homes and hills and valleys and beautiful mountain streams. One fine September morning more than a century and a quarter ago they were ready to begin their perilous journey. While the grass was yet fresh and glossy with the dew of the early morning they were called to prayer by Dr. Samuel Doak at Sycamore Shoals, almost in sight of where Gov. Robert L. Taylor was born, in Carter County, Tennessee. A native stone monument now marks this sacred spot of prayer. With the benediction of one of God's best educators and preachers resting upon their uncovered heads, these men of hope and courage began their onward march to meet their avowed enemy rather than let the enemy come for them. In this they were wise, for there could be no better battle ground for the attacking party than the side of a mountain when moun-

taineers are the oppressors. After many days of marching over high mountains and through deep valleys, our friends came to the camp of the enemy, pitched high up on King's Mountain. Colonel Ferguson would not let his men surrender, but declared that even "the Almighty himself could not drive him from his position." Our brave fellows had their faith pinned sincerely to the God this profane British colonel thus defied, and went forth to battle expecting victory. To their faith they added dry powder, good rifles, and a sure aim. Ferguson was killed; his men, most of them brave, were glad to surrender; and John Sevier and his companions in leadership and bravery won such a victory as caused Thomas Jefferson to call it the turning point in the Revolutionary War, and he thus paved the way for the everlasting freedom you and I enjoy. The battle lasted about an hour.

When the men were assembling to march from our own mountains, "Bonny Kate," long since the mother of several children, came with her son, James, not yet sixteen years of age, to present him to her brave husband, General Sevier, with these words: "Here is another of our boys that wants to go with his father and brother to the war, but we have no horse for

him, and, poor fellow, it is a great distance to walk." But the gallant lad, with an older brother, did go, and they fought side by side, with their father and the other brave men of the mountains in the most remarkable battle of our great war for independence—a victory that hastened the close of this fearful struggle and moved up by several years the time when the colonies, represented by such men as Washington, Franklin, Sevier, and others, could declare themselves in fact and in truth free and independent States.

When our general returned from this brilliant victory, he was much more of a hero than ever. He had won great glory in the Indian wars, and is said never to have lost a battle; but now he had taken a handful of mountain men, untrained in the practice and experiences of war, and won a complete and glorious victory over the trained and tried soldiers of the King of England. However, these Englishmen did not know how to shoot straight, and that is the one thing needful in battle and in hunting. Moreover, the mountaineers were enthusiastic and believed in the cause of liberty for which they were fighting. There were other great leaders in these fights, but we are now talking about John Sevier, the gallant young Virginian.

Some years after this famous victory, but before the colonies had become united, the folks who lived in the beautiful mountain fastness known as East Tennessee became fearful of their future. They thought the Continental government as it then existed was not giving them the support and protection they deserved; hence they looked about to find some means of providing these things for themselves. They thought a permanent organization would solve all their problems. Likewise they felt that their mountains and valleys and running streams placed them in a class to themselves peculiar only to their own needs and desires. It was the world-old cry of liberty found ever and always in the minds and hearts of people who live among the mountains and who breathe the free, pure air and sniff the life-giving mist of the sparkling brooklet as it goes coursing its adventurous way to the far-off seas. Read the story of William Tell, The Lady of the Lake, or Scottish Chiefs, and you will see how the people of the mountains love freedom even better than life itself.

So when representatives met to form a new State and find a governor therefor, with one accord their minds turned to the man whose every act had made him a hero in the thoughts of the people, and whose ideals of law

and order and government had caused men high up in the affairs of life to recognize in him great qualities of statesmanship. Moreover, every one had the utmost faith in him as a man, not only of courage and steadfastness of purpose, but also of fidelity and truthfulness. They were about to call their new State "Frankland," which really means "the land of the free," or "free land." Thus you see every act of these rugged people was turned toward freedom in its highest and noblest form. When General Sevier was asked to become governor of this new State, he did so with great hesitation, for he felt that sooner or later the right sort of united government for all the colonies would be agreed upon and that in due time these liberty-loving mountaineers would be properly protected and wisely cared for. But he could not resist the call of the men who had followed him over hundreds of miles of rough, ungraded mountain roads to suppress the Indians, defeat the redcoats at King's Mountain, and make possible the existence of a new world the like of which history does not record. And he could not say them nay. It was like a call from his own kith and kin, and he must not fail them. For almost three years he guided with a wise head and steady hand the new State of Frankland, sometimes called

“Franklin;” and when it seemed best to dissolve this State, for reasons not necessary to give here, and again become one with the colonies, he did so in the best possible way, and was, as always, true and loyal to every interest of the colonies and of the men who were leaders therein.

Too much cannot be said in praise of the people who formed the State of Frankland. The descendants of many of them live among the Southern mountains to-day, bearing the same names as did their ancestors, fostering a spirit of freedom and liberty and independence second to no people in the world. Some of them have gone out into other parts of the world and made great names for themselves in the field of law, statesmanship, theology, medicine, mechanical and industrial arts, and education, and in all vocations known to mankind.

I think if General Sevier could talk to us now, he would be prouder of his part in the battle of King’s Mountain and the governorship of the State of Frankland than any two things he did during his long and useful life filled with remarkable deeds of heroism.

There is another incident in the life of John Sevier which I think will interest you as boys and girls and also as men and women. Like all great and good men,

he had some enemies who sought to do him harm in several ways. They caused him to be arrested and carried across the mountains to be confined and taken away from his beautiful home and the freedom he loved so well. Nothing could be more humiliating to a man of Sevier's temperament, impetuous disposition and independent spirit and bearing, who was calm in danger and brave when needed, than to be placed in charge of men whose duty it was to see that his privileges were restricted. But the men of the mountains with whom he had shared every danger were not content to let him thus suffer humiliation, and immediately set about ways and means of rescue. General Sevier had been carried to Morganton, in North Carolina, for trial. The story is best told by William Smith, one of the rescuers, and is taken from Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*:

“In a luckless hour the puissant governor of the western wilds, whose prowess was known and acknowledged from Watanga to the Chattanooga Mountain, was seized by an armed posse and conveyed into the settlements on a charge of high treason against the State of North Carolina. Had the destroying angel passed through the land and destroyed the firstborn in every section, the feelings of the hardy frontiersmen would not

have been more incensed; had the chiefs and warriors of the whole Cherokee nation fallen upon and butchered the defenseless settlers, the feeling of retaliation and revenge would not have been more deeply awakened in their bosoms. They had suffered with him; they had fought under him; with them he had shared the dangers and privations of a frontier life and a savage warfare, and they were not the spirits to remain inactive when their friend was in danger. The chivalry of the country gathered together, a number of men were selected to fly to the rescue; armed to the teeth, those dauntless sons of the woods crossed the mountains, determined to rescue their beloved commander or leave their bones to bleach upon the sandhills of North Carolina, a proud monument to the children of the West. It was ascertained that the trial was to take place in Morganton, and thither this daring band bent their eager steps. Their plan was to obtain his release by stratagem; and if that failed, the next step was to fire the town and in the hurry and confusion burst the prison doors by force and make their escape. Probably at no time before had the quiet town of Morganton assumed such an air of excitement and interest as the present; for the fame of the unfortunate

prisoner had gone before him, and the novelty of the scene had drawn together a large crowd.

“The Franks had approached as near to the town as they deemed it prudent, where four of them concealed themselves near the road, while two of their number, James Cozby and Nathaniel Evans, went forward into the town. They rode to a convenient distance from the courthouse, tied their horses to a limb of a tree, near to which they hid their rifles, and boldly entered the town, their capacious hunting shirts concealing the side arms they had prepared in case of need. Soon they had mingled with the crowd and easily passed off for countrymen attracted there by common curiosity. Evans had taken charge of General Sevier’s celebrated race mare and led her up in front of the courthouse door, the bridle carelessly thrown over her head; he was apparently an unconcerned spectator of passing events. Cozby entered the house, and there, arraigned at the bar, sat the object of their solicitude; there he sat, as firm and undaunted as when charging the hosts of Wyuca on the Lookont Mountain.

“Slowly he turned his head and their eyes met. Sevier knew the rescue was at hand, but he was restrained from any outward demonstration by a significant shake

of Cozby's head; but it could not prevent the tear of gratitude, for he knew there were daring spirits near that would peril their lifeblood in his defense. During a pause in the trial Cozby stepped forward in front of the judge and in that quick and energetic tone so peculiar to him asked the judge if he was done with that man. The question, manner, and tone caused every person to start, to cast their eyes on the speaker, then on the judge, all in amazement. In the meantime Sevier had caught a glimpse of his favorite mare standing at the door; taking advantage of the confusion, he made one spring to the door, the next he was safely in the saddle, and with the speed of thought was borne from the wondering crowd. 'Yes,' cried a waggish voice, 'I'll be damned if you ain't done with him.' His comrades were not slow to follow in his wake, and, although immediate pursuit was made, a few minutes brought him to the main body, who, with one wild shout of victory, closed in the rear and bore him on in triumph. That night they rested at the house of a friend about twenty miles distant, from whence they made an easy journey to their homes, content that they had gained a bloodless victory."

Every one likes to read the story of Sevier's escape on his favorite racing mare known throughout the coun-

try for her speed and endurance. Imagine her going at a break-neck rate over hills and mountains and through valleys and caves, paying no attention to streams or ditches until she should deliver her beloved master out of danger's reach, safe in the cliffs of the mountains he called home and which claimed him for their very own.

You are not surprised that when the whole of Tennessee, from the Father of Waters to the snow-capped mountains, became one State by the signature of President Washington on June 1, 1796, the men who had followed our hero from one victory to another, and under his great leadership had never lost a battle, arose as one man and made him their first governor.

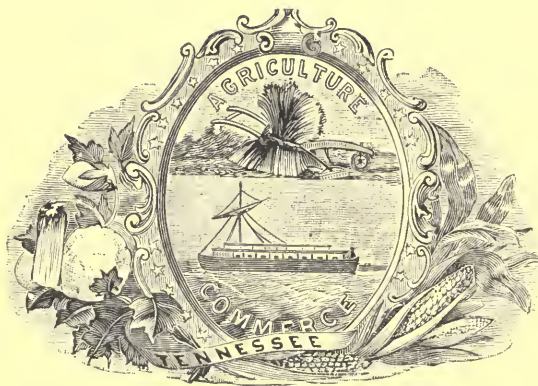
He lived threescore years and ten, the scriptural time allotted to man. For three quarters of a century his ashes rested in the State of Alabama, where he died while on business for the Federal government. During an administration of Governor Taylor all that was left mortal of this great and good man was deposited in the courthouse yard in Knoxville and a monument erected, the inscription upon which tells briefly the story of this hero who always won.

While East Tennessee is justly proud of this distinguished hero of many battles, the other divisions of the

State likewise take great pride in him and are always glad to claim as their own a man who has added so much glory and valor to the fair name of Tennessee.

The last paragraph of Phelan's History of Tennessee no doubt expresses better than anything else the real feeling of those who live in a State which has such a glorious and noble history (page 233):

“It is no wonder that Tennesseans wherever they go are noted for their pride in their State, and that the inhabitants of other States sometimes say that ‘a Tennessean pities people who do not live in Tennessee.’ Whenever a Tennessean speaks of his State, it is after the fashion of an eloquent son of Tennessee, Williams H. Stephens, who once said: ‘I speak for that heroic State who was baptized in her infancy with the sprinkling of Revolutionary blood on King’s Mountain; who, five years afterwards struck again for independence under the banner of the daring young State of Franklin; who grappled, single-handed and alone, for fifty years with the dusky warriors of the forest in all their battles from the Kentucky line to the Southern gulf; who beat back the British legions at New Orleans; who smote the false Spaniard at Pensacola; who rushed with Taylor into the breach at Monterey, and shared in the triumphal march from Vera Cruz to Mexico.’ ”

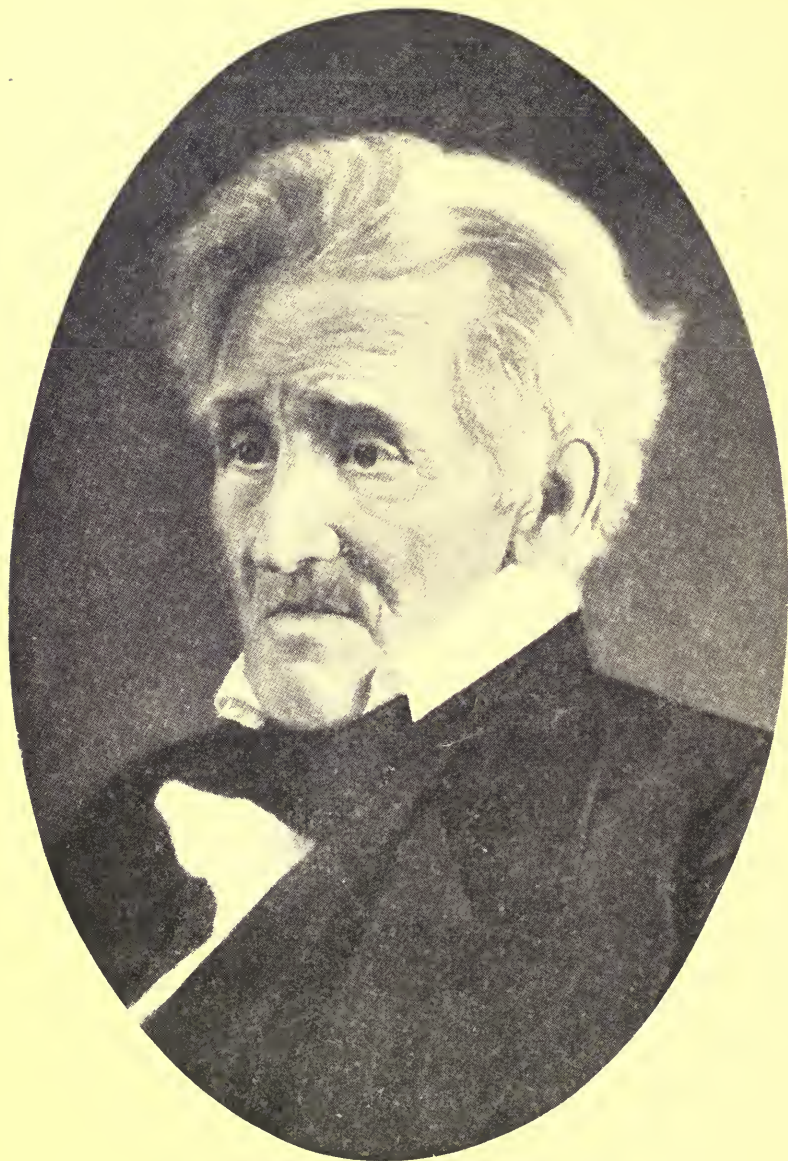


“THE IRON MAN”

One fine morning down in the Carolinas, where the magnolias bloom and where the air is all laden with the fragrance of wild jasmine, thyme, and tulips, and where the soft breezes from the rose-scented gardens of rich and rare old homes of splendor waft their zephyr waves far over the broad fields and deep into the lowland swamps, a little boy suddenly found himself getting up from a very hard fall in which he was apparently much the worse for being in the middle of a bad fix. He was a slender lad, with clear, gray eyes, and shocky hair that grew straight up, it seemed; his face was rough, but rugged and honest. He looked both like an Irishman and a Scotchman, and indeed he was both.

But you are wondering why our boy had such a sudden fall and how he came out of it, for his face showed rage and fiery sparks almost darted from his piercing eyes as he brushed the dust from his face, while a little stream of rich red blood trickled hurriedly down his cheek from a tiny wound over his right eye. And now I must tell you about it.

In those days the people of this country were in a life-



ANDREW JACKSON

and-death struggle for freedom and independence of the mother country, England. In the South the king's troops had wellnigh taken possession of everything and everybody, for a great many of the people were Tories, or British sympathizers, anyway. His Majesty's soldiers had no regard for any people who did not belong to their side of the contention unless they were rich and powerful enough to command respect and consideration. The soldiers in their travels would often pick up boys and carry them along to do their odd jobs, such as currying the horses, fetching water, building fires, cleaning boots, polishing saddles, and such other chores as the soldiers did not wish to do themselves. In fact, they liked to be regarded as gentlemen of leisure living in the enemy's country, feasting on the fat of the land, with servants to do for them even the smallest thing. So they had picked up this shocky-headed boy and thought to make of him a runner of errands and a sort of lackey for all. His clothing showed him to be very poor, and everything about him indicated the direst sort of poverty and need and dependence. The captain to whose company this boy had been attached the day before arose this fine morning of which I speak and found himself in need of a servant. Our boy was called and ordered to

clean his captain's boots and polish his saddle. But the young fellow, only twelve years of age though he was, said: "A Continental will not black the boots of a red-coat!" And there was fire in his eyes when he said it. The British captain, enraged at this lack of obedience and spirit of rebellion in one so young and evidently so poor, threw his boot at the youngster, with the results described in the opening words of this story. From the very beginning of our war for independence, the Britishers, from privates in the ranks to generals in command of armies, were surprised at the independent spirit shown by all classes of true Americans. No British captain could understand how a boy like our hero could show such bravery. But of course the captain called it impudence and insolence. It was the last time he shied a boot at this boy. Realizing that brute strength and numbers were against him, he felt that his only chance lay in running away, which he promptly did, suffering many hardships in the form of hunger, night sleeping places, and constant fear as he sought in every way he knew or could imagine to avoid detection and possible recapture at the hands of his hated and dreaded foe. But this tyrannical and overbearing captain never saw the youngster again. The boy set his face like hard steel

against his enemy and the enemies of his country. He resolved that if ever the chance came he would do his country a service in the largest way possible. So this is your introduction to Andrew Jackson, who came to be one of our greatest men, as you will see.

You do not need to know all the struggles this boy had and what hardships were his. He became what was known in those days as a "bound boy;" that is, he bound himself to a man who agreed to keep him in food and clothing and the other necessities of life for what work the boy would be able to do on the farm and about the house. He managed to gather a very meager education, such as reading and writing, and a little spelling and arithmetic. He wrote poorly, spelled poorly, and knew but little mathematics. However, he did learn to read very well indeed, because he enjoyed that. Haven't you noticed how much easier it is for you to do or learn to do that which you enjoy, and that no task or work is ever difficult so long as you do enjoy it? So this boy became a very great reader. He read everything he could buy, which was not a great deal, but he was able to borrow many books which he devoured in the most rapid manner. One thing about this boy Andrew, he seemed to remember the most important things

he read. As he grew into young manhood he developed an ambition to be a lawyer. By the way, this was the ambition of many young men in those days. They had such fine examples to inspire them. There was Alexander Hamilton, our first Secretary of the United States Treasury; Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence; and John Marshall, the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. All of these were very inspiring to a young Scotch-Irishman such as we are describing. In those days law was not studied as it is now—in a college of law; but various books on law were read either at home or in the office of some other lawyer who was willing to take in a young fellow and give him the privilege of his law library, together with whatever experience he might get. But our youngster did quite a deal of other reading. Like many another man of promise and great ability, he had heard of a land across the mountains which was full of interest and which afforded great opportunity for those beginning their careers in the law or other professions. So he journeyed across the rough and rugged Carolina mountains until he came to Jonesboro, the oldest town in Tennessee. He was now very handsome, more than six feet in height,

sat on his horse as if he had grown to the saddle, was very fond of a good traveler, and rode only the best. He presented a very distinguished appearance on horseback, quite as much so as did General Washington, of whom you have read a great deal. He practiced law in the courts of North Carolina, of which our own Tennessee was at that time a part. He was fond of outdoor sports—particularly horse racing, a thing very common in those days. I said he read a great many books outside of law. He was particularly fond of the works of Lord Francis Bacon, a great English writer who lived in the time of William Shakespeare, more than three hundred years ago. Lord Bacon was so great a scholar that he tried to master all learning that he might have a knowledge of all things. Bacon wrote a series of articles called “Essays,” from which our friend frequently quoted in the midst of a speech before the court. He carried his books in saddlebags swinging across his horse, as nearly all the lawyers did in those days. It is said that on a certain occasion when it was known our friend would speak before the court the day following, a fun-loving admirer slipped a piece of real bacon into the saddlebags wrapped in the very same paper that had contained Bacon’s Essays; so that when our friend came to argue his case be-

fore the court the next day he said: "Now we will see what Bacon says about this." Proceeding to unwrap the supposed book, the piece of real bacon dropped out on the floor amidst the tremendous laughter of all present, including young Jackson himself.

While he enjoyed jokes and pranks and everything of that sort, he did not lose sight of his reading nor of his law study and practice. He attracted the attention of the leaders of the new nation, and they appointed him an attorney-general. This gave him much fame and added to his popularity. In the meantime several wars had come up between the white settlers and the Indians in which he had taken part, and always as a leader. He was fearless and dashing in his make-up and every one seemed to look to him to do the next thing. He led the white soldiers to victory over the Indians many times when defeat seemed to be staring them in the face. His own personal bearing inspired his followers with a determination to win at any cost to themselves. He had such wonderful control over himself that he could work when he was lazy, go right on when he was tired, overcome illness, and even ride and fight in battle when suffering from gunshot wounds of a serious nature. Moreover, he never permitted himself to turn back when he



THE HERMITAGE
Home of Andrew Jackson

had started to do a thing, or to be influenced by others to change his mind or sway him from that which he deemed wise and right and for the good of the greatest number of people. Because he was so strong-willed and such a complete master of himself I have called him "The Iron Man."

Of course, a man of such fiery temperament would naturally make many personal enemies, especially since he was in politics; and no leader of men in his day could keep out of politics. He was severely criticized for many of his policies by some of the leading men of that day, among them John Sevier, of whom you know; Thomas H. Benton, for whom both a county and a town in Tennessee are named; and by General Dickinson. In those days the only way to settle a dispute or criticism was by personal encounter in a duel. This was called the "code of honor." Long since men have learned that it takes more courage to say "No" to a challenge than it does to fight. So our friend immediately challenged his enemies to a duel. Friends prevented a personal encounter with Sevier; but the duel was fought with Benton, who was severely wounded, carrying the bullet to his grave. General Dickinson was an expert with pistols, and our friend was known to be a careless marksman, for whom

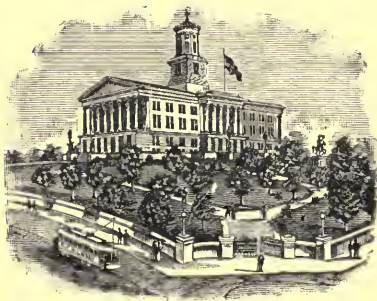
his friends greatly feared. On the way to the dueling ground the General amused himself by clipping twigs off the trees, hitting certain marks as his horse galloped, and performing other marvelous feats with pistols. But the race has never been to the swift, nor the victory to the expert. At sunrise the contestants met. Our friend, who was somewhat tall and spare, wore a large, loose-fitting coat. When the word was given to "fire," General Dickinson quickly discharged his revolver and was surprised that our hero did not fall. The General, shocked into fright, took a step or two backward as if to retreat, but his second made him take his place again, whereupon our hero took deliberate aim and wounded the General so desperately that he died that night. Our hero did not escape so fortunately as he appeared, for when he walked out of sight behind a clump of bushes he displayed blood-stained garments from a severe wound which kept him abed some months. His great pride and magnificent iron will would not let him make known suffering in the presence of an enemy.

Now we come to the second war between this country and Great Britain, in which our hero was to play an important part. Already he had won much fame in the Indian wars and in his duels with men of distinction,

so much so that he was a popular idol and worshiped as such by the people wherever he was known. The President of the United States sent word to this lawyer, warrior, political leader, that he was needed to thwart the American foe in the South, and the whole people rejoiced, for they felt that the country's honor was in safe hands. Our hero now wore the shoulder straps of a general, and he was to be sent to the defense of New Orleans. He immediately gathered about him six thousand mountaineer riflemen from Kentucky and Tennessee, many of whom had followed him to victory against the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend, and others who had been with him when he smote the false Spaniard at Pensacola. They followed him with much eagerness now because victory was in the air and they knew it.

It is said that on the eve of the battle of New Orleans, our hero general was riding about the outskirts of his army seeing that everything was in readiness for the battle on the following day, when he met a British soldier who had strayed too far from his camp. They engaged in conversation about prospects. The Britisher said: "Our general is Lord Packenham. Who is yours?" To which our hero made reply: "Lord Jesus Christ and Gen. Andrew Jackson, and we'll whip the British to-

morrow.” And they did. He won this battle in twenty-five minutes, and only eight of our men were killed, while the enemy lost twenty-six hundred, including their general. But the war had really been over fourteen days when this famous victory was won. The treaty was signed at Ghent, in Belgium, but in those days news traveled so slowly that it was too late in getting there. But it made Jackson a national figure and every one expected him to be President some time, which high position he reached in 1829, serving eight years. He was very popular as a President, although he ruled with an iron hand. By his prompt action in South Carolina in 1832 he put off the great Civil War for almost a generation. Had he not shown that great spirit of independence as a boy when ordered to do a menial service by a British soldier, and had he failed to maintain that high spirit of independence, he would never have been the great man he was. After serving as an epoch-making President, he retired to his estate at The Hermitage, near Nashville, Tennessee, where he spent his declining years amid peaceful surroundings, rich in the estimation of his country and highly honored by the nations of the world. The end came peacefully in 1845, when he had lived seventy-eight years. This country has produced no greater man.



THE HUNTER HERO

While the gallant young Virginian of whom you have just read was having his troublous times directing the affairs of the independent State of Frankland, there was born within the confines of this State, not far from where the Governor had his home, but on the opposite bank of the Nolachuckey River and in the same county where



DAVID CROCKETT

was the capital of this little province, a boy who was to leave for years to come his impress upon the entire country. It was in 1786, on the seventeenth day of August, that Davy Crockett first saw the light of day; and the place was Greene County, only a few miles west of where

Sevier lived in the county of Washington. No doubt you have noticed how most of the counties in many of the States bear the name of some distinguished hero of the early period of our country. Sevier has a county named for him, as Washington and Greene Counties are named for great men. Then, too, our hunter hero was born not much more than a dozen miles from where Daniel Boone killed the bear of which you are told in another place in this book. And there are Boone and Crockett Counties.

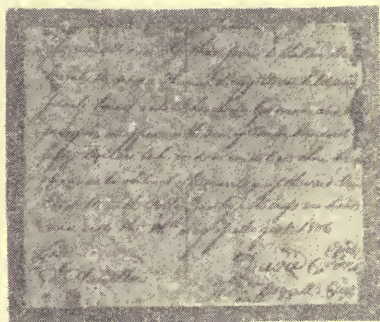
Davy's parents were poor, so poor that they could not send him to school; hence he grew up with but little learning, but with great knowledge of the woods and fields and the wild animals that roamed the almost unbroken forest. In those days education seemingly was not so necessary as it is now. People lived mostly by hunting and trapping and fishing. They needed but little money; and when they traded, they used skins of animals and powder and lead instead of money. Think how inconvenient it must have been to get along without money!

If you could take a little journey with me, I would show you where Davy's house stood and where he was born. Old people say that for years and years there was

an old apple tree in the yard of the old home of this boy who became a famous man and died a hero's death. I have seen people who ate apples from this old tree; and they were good apples, too. For years a sheep barn stood on a corner of the Crockett lot, and near it was a pile of stones and charred earth showing where the chimney of the old house had been.

Like most people of his day, Davy married young. Sometimes when you are at Dandridge, in Jefferson County—another county bearing the name of a great man—ask the county court clerk to let you see Davy Crockett's marriage license. You will see that he was married to Polly Findley in 1806 when he was but twenty years of age. Despite the fact that his parents were poor and without money, Davy had learned to write as well as to hunt and to do other things requiring skilled hands and steady nerves. He had a native shrewdness that made him know he should be able to write his name if nothing more. Don't you think that was very fine in him?

Here is a strange coincidence in the life of Davy Crockett. When he was born, John Sevier was governor of the State of Frankland, which in the very nature of things could not keep itself together for a long while;



MARRIAGE BOND
OF
DAVID CROCKET

[Faint handwritten notes at the bottom of the page]

TENNESSEE

and when he was married to Polly Findley, John Sevier was governor of the State of Tennessee, which had been in existence just ten years, with Sevier as governor eight out of the ten, and he was to remain in the governor's chair four years yet.

But I have told you that Davy was a great hunter, and now I must tell you a little about him in that life of which he was so very fond. In those days there were a great many bears and deer and other wild animals, but not so many of this larger game as in the days of Daniel Boone. However, there was an abundance of smaller game, like the coon and fox and beaver, all of which were interesting to the hunter even if they were small. Davy kept a large pack of hounds to aid him in hunting the fox and coon when deer and bear could not be found. Often the chase was long, and sometimes they were away from home many days at a time in quest of game of all sorts. He grew to be very skillful with his old-fashioned long rifle, and could kill a bear as far as his eagle eye could see to shoot or his trusty rifle would send a bullet, which was a long, long way. Aside from selling the fur of these animals, Davy often wore clothing made from their skins, and he and his neighbors frequently used their meat for food. There is a sort of fable that

so dangerous to the animals of the forest was Davy on account of his skill with his long rifle that they came to know of him through each other by animal language and were always on the lookout for him. It is said that one day an old, old coon was high up in a big oak tree sunning himself, when some dogs "treed" him. Soon their master came up and was about to take aim at the coon with his good rifle, when the old coon called out: "Is that you, Davy?" And when he answered, "Yes," the old coon said: "Don't shoot, Mr. Crockett, I'll come down; for I've heard your gun never misses fire and your aim is sure." So the coon came down, and Davy did not have to waste his powder and lead, but got the coon anyway.

They tell another story about how skillful Davy was when he wanted to do a sort of mischievous thing, which in these days might be called stealing, but which in those old days was counted good-natured fun. It is said that Davy was making a journey by boat on the Mississippi River. At that time it was customary to "treat"—that is, to provide a drink from the boat tavern for all on board. Sometimes this entailed a heavy expense on the person doing the treating, and as money was not very plentiful it often became a serious question. Davy

Crockett was in his usual condition—without money. He was dressed in the ordinary manner—coon-skin cap, hunting shirt, and trousers of the skins of animals. Moreover, he carried his long hunting rifle. He had with him a coon skin which he offered as pay for “drinks to go ’round.” I suppose this was when he was a candidate for office and that many of his voters were on board the old-fashioned boat. You know even in these good days candidates sometimes “treat” the voters. Well, when Davy’s coon-skin money gave out he didn’t know what to do, for he had no more money. The bar keeper had carelessly tossed the skin, with several others, in one corner of the room, but near the counter. Our hunter, with the keen eye for which he was noted, discovered the tail of his former coon skin protruding a little too far his way over the counter. Knowing that soon he would have to treat again, he pulled the tail and the skin came his way. A few minutes later he was called upon to again treat the crowd, whereupon he offered his coon skin in payment. The barkeeper took it, thinking, no doubt, that such a hunter as Crockett was known to be would have a great many skins for sale. He threw the hide in exactly the same place and it fell in the same position. Again Davy slyly slipped it out by the tail

and again treated his friends. He kept this up for seven successive times, and would no doubt have succeeded several more times, only they came to the end of their journey. And the barkeeper never discovered that he had bought his own coon skin six times. The incident greatly amused many of the men on the boat, who all the while knew what the keen hunter was doing, but they would not tell on him. Do you blame them?

Not long after the marriage with Polly Findley, Davy moved over into West Tennessee and entered politics. In the early days, when a man had a special gift for speaking, was a great story-teller, a great hunter, or achieved local fame in any way, the people thought he ought to be elected to Congress or some other high office. It sometimes happened that a man would win out in politics first because the people liked him, and not so much because he was specially fitted for the high position to which he was chosen. Now while our friend was not a great scholar, he was far above the average in his ideals of the best things for the people and of what laws ought to be made to suit a majority of the citizens of the State. Then he was of a friendly spirit, which made him very popular with every one who knew him. In addition to his general principles of friendship, he was a

brave and fearless man when it came to fighting. In the war against the Creek Indians he showed so much skill and bravery that the soldiers elected him their colonel, a very high honor in those days. So you see he had some claim to the confidence and esteem of the people aside from his skill and prowess as a hunter.

After having been elected to the legislature from Giles County, and later from Obion County, whither he had moved, he was elected to the National Congress in 1827. This was indeed a great recognition for a man who had gone to school but four days in his life. But there were many fine traits about him, and his friends never failed to tell these good things. One story is particularly interesting. It is said that when Crockett was just a youth he learned that his father owed a rather well-to-do man a small sum which he seemingly could not pay. Davy went to the man and made a bargain whereby, if he worked a whole year for the hard taskmaster, a clear receipt should be given. This he is said to have done in order that he might have the pleasure of seeing the look of joyous surprise on his father's face when the paid note should be presented to him at the end of the year. A boy who would do this would be sure to win, don't you think?

But even if Davy was good-natured and jovial and popular with the people, he was independent and would permit no one to control him. General Jackson was President, and, being from Tennessee, he thought Colonel Crockett, likewise a Tennessean, ought to support him as President in all the things he did. In his manner before the people Colonel Crockett had won them by standing for what he thought was right. He had many quaint and curious sayings, all of which he used in his campaigns and in his utterances against President Jackson. One of them you have heard often, and I have heard it used by many people far, far away from Tennessee. It is: "Be sure you are right, then go ahead." It was his motto, and he followed it carefully all his life. In whatever he did he was sure in his own mind that he was right. Once coming to the conclusion, no power could change him, and he never faltered in his endeavor to carry out his life purpose.

After serving four years in Congress he was defeated, then elected, and again defeated in 1835. You would not think a man with so little learning would dare write a book, but he wrote two during his last term in Congress, and they were good books, 'tis said. Everybody read them because of their true sayings expressed in

quaint and humorous language. He made a trip to Boston with a number of distinguished men, and wrote a story about it which was widely read. He did not like Martin Van Buren, whom Jackson wanted for his successor as President. So he wrote a scathing and ridiculous book about him which was full of many amusing things, most of which were true. For this, Jackson and his friends in Tennessee never forgave Crockett; and when time for his reelection came, they used all their forces against him and succeeded in his defeat.

I have said that Colonel Crockett was independent. He was also a man of very great pride, so much so that when he was defeated he would not remain in Tennessee, but decided to leave the State forever. Perhaps he did not exactly mean it that way, but so it proved, as you shall soon see.

About this time Texas, which you know as the "Lone Star State," was having a serious struggle with Mexico for her independence. On every side she seemed besieged with foes that should have been her friends. The Mexicans were doing all they could to retain Texas regardless of what should happen to the people who had gone there to make it their home. Many brave men from the South and the East, attracted by the heroic strug-

gle Texas was making for independence, went to this great new country that seemed to be so full of evil days. Once there, they took on the true spirit of Texas and could not get away, but must stay and fight what seemed a losing battle.

Chagrined by defeat and smarting under the victory of his enemies, our friend turned his footsteps toward this new country, seeking an independence which he always kept for himself, and determined to help her all he could. He joined the army and was in the famous siege of the Alamo, where, on March 6, 1836, by overwhelming numbers, he, with many another brave fellow, met a soldier's death at the hands of the barbaric Mexicans, who, not content with murdering the people within the fort, poured kerosene on the bodies, some of which were not yet dead, and set fire thereto, that they might enjoy the hideous pleasure of seeing the blaze. It is said that Crockett with his trusty rifle slew a dozen Mexicans before they finally overpowered and killed him and his brave companions, among whom were the young and chivalrous Lieutenant Travis and brave Colonel Bowie, inventor of the famous knife that bears his name.

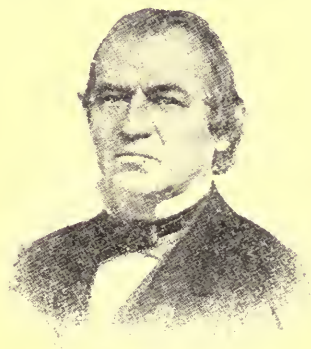
Thus went out in a seemingly useless manner the life of Davy Crockett at the age of fifty, all too soon we

would think; yet he has left a saying that will live for many, many years, a name that brightens the pages of history, and a heroism that thrills us with delight at the very mention of his name. But the death of Crockett and his brave followers was not in vain. It set the whole country on fire at the cruel manner in which death came, so that the Mexican War was hastened, if not entirely caused, by the heartless murders; and within ten years from his ignoble death the whole country was avenged of his sad fate, and to-day Texas is one of the most glorious in our great sisterhood of States.



A BORN LEADER

When one walks for days and days up hill and down over valley and dale, it is tiresome; but when one walks for days and days up one high mountain and down another, one gets very, very tired. Only the most persistent spirit and the greatest desire for better things could



ANDREW JOHNSON

keep a tired woman and little boy, leading an old horse hitched to a cart, going day after day, even after all three were so tired that many times before nightfall they wanted so much to rest by the hot and dusty roadside and moisten their thirsty lips at the little spring from

which ran a swift-flowing stream down the steep mountain side. The wayworn mother knew they must keep on; the bright-eyed boy, with his bare feet and face of tan and coal-black hair, knew they must keep on; even the lazy, laggard old horse seemed to know there was as yet no place to stop.

As they pushed their tiresome journey on the mountain top where the road was level and somewhat wider than the average, two horsemen rode by, one on a very fine steed which he sat with a gracefulness that would excite envy even in the heart of the best of riders. He sat as erect as an Indian; his horse pranced with all the pride of the Arab steeds from which he was descended, and arched his proud neck in a knowing way as his master gently drew the ~~reign~~ and bowed in that chivalrous way known only to a Southerner in the presence of women. The mother and her handsome son stood aside to let the horsemen ride by. The boy looked at the distinguished rider who lifted his hat so politely, and, turning to his mother with tears in his eyes, said: "Mother, I'd like to be a man like that!"

The man was Andrew Jackson, "The Iron Man," of whom you have heard much already, and the boy was Andrew Johnson, of whom you are yet to hear much.

What an inspiration to the lad must have been the fine-looking young lawyer as he rode by on his magnificent horse with all the pride of a conqueror; for he had it in his mind to do some big things in his life, and the anticipated glory shone from his brilliant eyes and reflected on his beaming countenance. Yes, and I think the boy must have gotten great inspiration from the high mountains which on every side lifted their rugged peaks high into the heavens and told a story of strength and power and beauty all their own. He could look at them and say: "From you I shall draw my inspiration for high and noble deeds. Your builder and maker is God himself; and if men fail me, I know I may look and behold you, always standing pointing upward and beckoning me to do my best. You are always faithful and true as God made you." In after years Andrew Johnson did point to those beloved mountains and call them his beacon lights of faith and power and hope.

Just at sunset of a long, hot, sultry day, this boy and his mother came to a little village which had once been the capital of the ill-starred State of Frankland, and sought rest for the night. Here they soon decided to make their home. Little did they or those who gave them aid think that in years to come this barefooted lad

would make their little town known from one end of the nation to the other, and that in the most troublesome times the nation was to ever see. Even to-day, after Andrew Johnson has been dead nearly forty years, people come from long distances just to see the old shop in which this boy worked and where he grew to manhood as a tailor; many of his tools—such as needles, thimbles, and the tailor's goose—are to be seen in the house of his grandson, Hon. Andrew Johnson Patterson, who resides in the old Johnson home at Greeneville, Tenn. Were you to visit this little town, people would point with pride to a little old house in the upstairs of which Andrew Johnson made his first speech. But I am anticipating my story.

In such a life as his you would expect a little of the romantic as well as so much of the picturesque and fearless doing. It has been said, and perhaps truly so, that a little turn of Fortune's wheel, which we sometimes call luck or chance or accident, has more to do with our lives than all the careful planning we may do. We will now see how an idle, flippant remark led to the molding of a life that was to tell mightily for a great nation in times when strong men quivered at the burden of responsibility and when their souls grew sick at

the thought of possible failure. As this boy and his mother came down the one street of the straggling village of Greeneville, some girls were playing



SHOP OF ANDREW JOHNSON, Tailor
At Greeneville, Tenn.

under the shade of a friendly oak by the roadside. They looked at the unique sight with some amusement, but they were used to travelers, and the incident would

perhaps have passed unnoticed had it not been for the fine appearance of the lad with his smooth face and coal-black hair. One of the girls playing in the shade turned to her companions and said: "Girls, there goes my beau; now see if it isn't!" Of course no attention was paid to the remark, but more came of it. The boy and his mother took up residence in the hamlet, and soon he as a tailor became acquainted with other tradesmen of the town, who were of material aid to each other, among them one Thomas McCardle, a cobbler. This cobbler had a daughter, Eliza, and it was she who made the above remark upon first seeing Andrew Johnson the day he came to Greeneville. Naturally, with so many things in common, they came to know each other well, and within a year their love pledges were realized in a happy marriage, which no doubt had much to do with making Andrew Johnson the great man he was. As a boy he had been unable to go to school any, for his father, Jacob Johnson, was a very, very poor man, who could not even read in the simplest of books, and certainly could not write. He worked away all day long at his tailor's goose, nimbly plying his needle from early morning until far into the night. When finally the day's work was closed—not finished, for he never really finished—he sat

with his young wife, who taught him to read. He learned rapidly, but his developing mind suffered for information he did not have time to acquire, because he had to work all the day long to provide for himself and family the necessities of life. His good wife, busy with her household duties, could not read to him all the time. What was he to do? Already his active mind was turning to history, government affairs, and constitutional ideals. It took a great deal of reading in those days to be informed on such subjects, for there were few newspapers, and most people got their information from books and public debates. So Andrew Johnson liked people to read for him while he worked at his trade of making clothes. He paid fifty cents a day for these readers, and only a short time ago there was a man still living in Greeneville who had been paid to read to this man who was to become great by the things he knew and the things he accomplished. Nothing seemed to escape his wonderful mind. When he had more money and more time and could purchase books and read them, he became a very close student of words. He kept a dictionary near all the time, and it is said that he never had to look at any word the second time, so wonderful a memory did he possess.

As he grew in knowledge of books and constitutional government, his knowledge of men was not lost. Nor were the people of Greeneville slow to note and appreciate his fine development. They began talking about making him their leader, and soon elected him mayor of the little town. Not long after this a member of the legislature was to be elected for Greene and Hawkins Counties. Several men had announced from various parts of the two counties. A group of citizens, including some candidates themselves, were discussing the situation in one of the stores one night. Andrew Johnson was sitting on the counter listening to the discussion, saying a word now and then himself. He slid down off the counter and said rather excitedly: "I'm in that fight, too!" This was the real beginning of his career. He was elected to the lower house, later went to the State Senate, for which he was defeated in his second race, but was again elected in the third race. In the Senate he was one of the "Immortal Thirteen," which by their action caused Tennessee to be without any representation in the Senate of the United States for two years. Soon he was elected to Congress, and then governor of Tennessee for two terms, and finally was given the very highly exalted honor of being elected to the Senate of the United

States, in which position he was serving when the great Civil War came up. Many States in the South declared their independence of the Federal government and seceded, among them Tennessee. President Lincoln placed Tennessee under military government, with Andrew Johnson as governor. He was a Democrat in politics, but was for the Union, and was in politics what was known in those days as a "Union Democrat." Despite the fact that a great many people in Tennessee—in fact, a great majority of them—favored secession and slavery, Governor Johnson was very popular and did much to make less frightful the horrible evils of war in the State he had adopted for his own. It was a great blessing to Tennessee and her citizens that President Lincoln placed him in charge of her affairs. He lived in Nashville, and was there nearly two years without seeing his wife, because the rules of war would not permit her passage from her home far up in the mountains of the State, where the people were largely Union in sentiment, to the middle portion of the State, where their sympathy was largely for the Confederacy. Andrew Johnson was so popular and magnetic as a public speaker and a leader of men that he could speak to an audience greatly opposed to him in principle and receive their hearty applause, as the fol-

lowing incident will illustrate. He was expected to speak in a town the majority of whose citizens were against the Union. It was just at the breaking out of the war and feeling ran high, with hostilities ready to break out almost everywhere at practically any time. A great crowd had assembled at the station, among them some boys from a near-by college who came with the evident intention of breaking up the meeting. When the train came in, Senator Johnson got no further than the station platform, so great were the cries: "Speech! Speech!" For more than two hours he spoke in tones of eloquence and magnetism and persuasiveness for which few men are noted. He swayed the great audience by a mere nod of his head or beck of the hand until they hung on his very words. When he had finished, there was a breathless silence. The boys who came to do mischief gave one secession yell, when, to their utter astonishment, there was not a single response, and they had to flee rapidly to escape arrest. The personality of Andrew Johnson was greater than any sentiment, and the people, though opposed to him in principle, would not permit the smallest lack of respect to a man of such charm and power and high thought.

In 1864 the supporters of President Lincoln felt that

he should have a running mate from the South who agreed with him on his war policy. They chose Andrew



MONUMENT OF ANDREW JOHNSON

At Greeneville, Tenn.

(Our only President whose body lies in a
National Cemetery cared for by the
Federal Government)

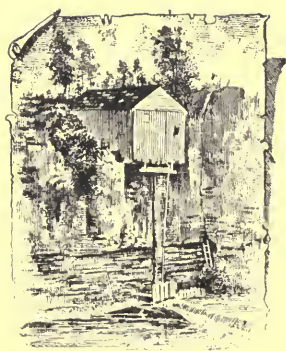
Johnson, who proved to be a fine vote-getter. When Mr. Lincoln died in 1865, Mr. Johnson, as Vice Presi-

dent, became President of the United States, the highest honor any man may have in this country. He tried to carry out Mr. Lincoln's plans, as well as his own, for the South, and in so doing incurred the displeasure of Congress; but most of the people of the country trusted him always, and his faith in them never wavered for a moment. His qualities of leadership were foresight, magnetism, and personal fearlessness.

When he came to the White House, his good wife was an invalid, and their daughter, Mrs. Martha Patterson, did the honors as the first lady of the land. When people sought to pay her homage, she said: "I am but a plain woman from the mountains of Tennessee; and if you seek to do me honor, you must honor my people also." Such noble sentiment could not fail to find a responsive note in the hearts and minds of the whole people of the country.

Andrew Johnson served for four years as President and then retired to the quiet and peace of his old home at Greeneville; but the people would not have it so, and again sent him to the Senate of the United States. He had been there but a short time when death called him. A tall marble shaft marks his last resting place on a hilltop near Greeneville in what is now a National Cemetery,

made so by the ceaseless energy of Congressman Walter Preston Brownlow, another man of whom a great story may be written. If you go to Greeneville, the people will point with pride to this hilltop, and you will read on the monument: "His faith in the people never wavered."



WALKING TO CONGRESS

It was a little house, and the rough split boards of the roof were held on by old logs and rocks, while the floor was made of puncheon—the halves of split logs held in place by wooden pins in bored holes. The spaces between the rough logs forming the walls were filled by small stones, red clay, and gravel. From the rafters inside—for there was no ceiling to this crude house of a home—hung bits of dried venison, smoked bacon, basket timber, seasoned hickory for ax handles, an old fishing pole made of slender pine in its natural growth—no knife had touched it except to take the peel off—two or three half-finished baskets, splits for chairs, some garden seed, a paper sack of sage leaves, and a rag bag of old clothes. Over the rude door—there was only one door—reposing safely in its rack made of natural forks cut from the sourwood—a tree of small growth well known in the Southern Appalachians—was the old-fashioned, muzzle-loading family rifle, more than six feet long from end of muzzle to hollow of stock, and with which its owner could pick a squirrel from the highest tree, kill a Virginia red

deer on the run, or pierce the vital spots of a bear at long range. Long years of practice, backed up by generations of forebears who were mountaineers, had given this man the peculiar and unerring skill of the men of the mountains. William B. Campbell, John Sevier, Isaac Shelby, and Colonel Cleveland knew what they were about when they selected riflemen from this mountain region to fight the battle of King's Mountain, October 7, 1780. They were men who could shoot straight, reload quickly, and fire all day without getting tired or losing nerve. And when Samuel Doak, founder of the first institution of learning in the Mississippi Valley, offered prayer for these mountain men at Sycamore Shoals on their way to fight this battle, which was to be the turning point for the friends of liberty in the Revolutionary War, he knew he was praying for men who could back up his prayers with deeds of valor, because the red blood in their veins was from ancestors whose lifeblood had made wet many another battlefield in the cause of freedom.

On the blackened and unpapered and unceiled walls of this log cabin were pasted a few old, old pictures—such as “The Mill,” “Lincoln and His Cabinet,” “Washington on Horseback,” “The Four Seasons,” and others of

a similar nature. But they were dark and soiled and almost beyond recognition. Doubtless they had been gathered from some sale of old property in a well-to-do farming community, or had been presented with the compliments of the country merchant far away. But they showed a little love for the higher and more refined things of life, and were better there than not. In this one room the family of several slept, cooked, and ate. The absence of half a log in one side of the house served for extra light. At nights and in stormy weather it was closed by a rough board hung on hinges made of leather taken from pieces of worn-out boots. The fireplace at which the family warmed themselves and before which their meals were cooked was full five feet wide and almost as deep. The "arch" was made by a huge oak piece, the trunk of quite a large tree. As far as the "hips," just above the fireplace, the chimney was of sandstone, found in abundance in these mountains. The rest of the way it was of small split sticks and mud, known locally as "stick and mud" chimney. The big hearth was of two large, flat limestone rocks, of which the little valley, watered by a trickling stream, was well supplied. An old-time "four poster" served as the sleeping place for the father, mother, and smaller children,

while the larger children slept in the “trundle bed,” kept securely hidden during the day pushed back under the other bed. Three or four chairs, a long bench, a table for dining, and a smaller table known as the “cook table,” made up the articles of furniture in this home. The exterior of the house was about what you would expect from the description of the interior. A stranger who knew not the ways of the mountaineers would not count it, at best, more than a small stable where sheep or cattle might be housed in safety if the weather were not too rough. But a dwelling place for folks who are to take part in the affairs of the nation and whose ancestry have helped save the day on well-known battle-fields—never!

A few acres of cleared land about the house, cultivated by the father, mother, and all the children, helped to give them a living, for they didn’t need much. The rocks were far more plentiful than the stalks of corn and beans, and even more abundant than the potatoes and onions that grew in the thin soil. But somehow they managed to live. This was not many years following the close of the Civil War, and every one lived on little. The country in which this home was located lies far up in the mountains, and at that time was miles from any

railroad or other public carrier. It had no schools to speak of, but few churches, and practically no roads. In the census of 1900 it was the third most illiterate county of native white voters in the United States. But in the Civil War and in the little unpleasantness of one hundred days with Spain it furnished its full quota of volunteers for the government army, and would again to-morrow if called upon.

One of these mountain States, West Virginia by name, has for her motto, "*Montani semper liberi*," which being freely translated reads: "Mountaineers are always free-men." And so the people of this little mountain county feel. Surrender to a strange power they might do, but accept conditions of tyranny—never. The oncoming civilization may change their conditions, make them live in painted houses, wear store clothes, eat "breakfast food," and put on a high collar with square corners, but it will never change their patriotism and belief in the old-fashioned religion of ultra-Protestantism.

The humble home of which I write was located at the head of a cove quite a way up the mountain side near a great spring whose water nourished the ten-acre lot in the midst of which was the house. The clearing was practically the last vestige of civilization as you went

from the little county seat, not more than a village, across the Allegheny Mountains into North Carolina. In this part of Tennessee (for it is of that State this is written) there were many travelers from the low country out along the rivers of the valley who came this way either to purchase a calf or two from the mountaineers or to take the old Indian trail leading into the neighboring State, whither they were going for the same purpose. Now and then, being unexpectedly overtaken by the shades of night or a severe mountain storm, the weary traveler would seek rest for himself and his tired horse within the hospitable walls of some mountaineer's lonely hut; for the mountain man is ever ready to share his scanty fare with friend and foe alike, if only he be ahungered. Late one afternoon in early spring, a cattle buyer, seeing an impending storm, drew rein before the lonely chalet of which I write and sought shelter both from the coming storm and the fast-falling night. There was nothing unusual about the stranger to distinguish him from others of his kind. His lazy, swinging stride, careless wearing of the clothing, wide hat, and unkempt beard and hair at once betokened his free life so far as conventionalities go. But withal there was keen native intelligence in his look. His horse was good for that

country, and his saddle was of the Texas style, just then coming into use in that section. The comforts he sought were not denied, and soon after partaking of their frugal meal the entire family gathered about the large open hearth to hear what news the stranger might bring from other settlements, and also from the county seat some miles away, where, as a horse and cattle dealer, he went on "first Mondays" to ply his business. While the storm raged without in midnight darkness, bending huge trees in its fierce path, and while the rain fell in torrents upon the "board-and-rock-pole" roof, the visitor gave the news as he had gathered it in many days of travel. After telling all the local and general news, and being quite loquacious, as you often find these traders, he proceeded to expostulate upon success in life in general. You know there are some people who have never achieved any great success, but who can tell you how it ought to be done. It happened that our friend, the trader, belonged to this class. In the course of his remarks he talked at length on what a "leetle larnin' in books mout do fer a feller," telling how some one whom he had seen went to school and was afterward given a fine position in a store; how another had been made president of a college; how another had become a

great preacher “up in York State;” and how still another had studied surgery, and how he had seen him in “‘bout a minute saw off er man’s leg what had been crushed in er sawmill.” This sage of the mountains would wind up his philosophical remarks by saying: “If I was a youngster, I’d go to skule. It’s kind uv quare what a leetle eddication’ll du fer ye. Hit seems to be just like spring rain on late-planted corn—fetch hit all out ter onet.” And with this wise remark he shifted his chew of tobacco to the other side of his mouth and spat in the dying embers.

THE AWAKENING

This little incident is told just to tell the story of one boy, and he lived in this humble mountain home, and his name was John—that is his name yet. He was the oldest of the family. His mass of thickly matted black hair overhanging keen black eyes did not tell a story any different from that of other boys or from other members of the family. In his eighteenth year he had hardly been out of his own “deestricht,” but remembered one journey to the county seat, fifteen miles away. For schooling he had read the “blue-backed” speller and could spell nearly all of its words, knowing many columns by heart,

from "baker" to "incomprehensibility." He had learned this by the light of the pine torch at night as much as from the poorly equipped school which he attended two or three months in the year. But he had that much learning, anyway. His knowledge of things was very limited. How could it be otherwise? His chief asset lay in the good health and spirit of free independence from breathing the pure air of the mountains more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea. He looked with awe upon a stranger and almost trembled with timidity at the thought of meeting and having to speak to some one he had never seen. Even while this stranger had been talking to the father, the boy lay almost hidden by the pots and other vessels for cooking placed away in the corner. Nevertheless, the words of the stranger had made a deep impression on his strong, but undeveloped, mind, and long after the guest had taken his departure, for he went with the breaking of the storm, the boy lay in his crude bed, but little better than a pile of oak leaves, and thought and thought and thought. Little by little it came to his untutored mind that he, too, might go to school and become educated. What a long step it was in the civilization of the race when the common man rose up in his strength

and majesty and said: "I, too, will go to school; I, too, will become educated!" Great it was because the vast majority of the human race are common people, anyway.

The next day, as the boy and his father and the other members of the family went about their spring work, he could not forget what the stranger had said. Somehow the words kept ringing in his ears, and he thought of the familiar simile used by the stranger and wondered if his life could be "fetched out" any. The birds sang in the trees, the squirrels in the near-by forest snapped the unfolding buds, and the boy thought more and more. At last he took courage to mention it to his father. What a load lifted from his heart as he thus spoke and saw that his father was pleased!

But how was he to go to school? His father had no money. The little plot of land yielded hardly a living. Nothing had been saved all these years against "a rainy day." Only the most meager living had been had from the tilling of the little farm, and that had to be supplemented by game from the father's trusty rifle. Then, where was a school, anyway, and how would he get there? It was thirty miles to a railway and he had never seen a train; besides, if there were a dozen railroads by his home, he couldn't go without money. His father, slow of thought

as he was, began to hope and plan a little for the boy, too. It stirred his pride to think that a son of his should be concerned enough to plan to go to school, and that, too, when he had nothing with which to plan. As the summer days came and went the boy and the father had a growing desire for the school and what it might do. There was the yearling calf which had been meant to purchase winter shoes and other clothing for the family, and which they had refused to sell to the trader for that very reason. But now it was decided that he should go to help John. He would probably not bring more than ten dollars, and the folks could get shoes and clothing some way, however difficult it might be. But when should he go, and how should he get there? After much pondering it was decided that he ought to go to one of the Eastern colleges. How did he learn about it? He had heard his teacher tell about old man Johnson's son, Henry, who had gone there and became great in mathematics—so great that he had made his way by coaching the sons of the wealthy and getting them ready for their final examinations. Neither John nor his father knew about the entrance requirements or anything of that sort.

LAUNCHING OUT

So one day in the early fall, when the fodder was in the shock on the ten-acre lot, the potatoes had been put away, and only the pumpkins and beans and nuts remained to be garnered, John, with his steer money of ten big dollars in his pocket, left the little home far up in the mountains, and with his worldly possessions done up in an old carpet bag, the gift of a friend of the family, he set out to walk the thirty miles to the nearest railway town. It was a bright autumnal morning. The chestnuts and hickorynuts were just beginning to shed their luscious fruit. Now and then a squirrel on his way to his winter home with a nut in his paws would cross the path, and John, too, would stop to gather a few nuts for his own use. But he trudged on, and when noon came he sat down by a friendly tree, from under which flowed a cool spring, to eat his lunch of simple food put up by his mother. Late in the afternoon he arrived at the station but little worse for his journey of thirty miles. It was not much of a walk for his supple young body and strong, wiry limbs. He had never seen a train, nor even the picture of one. His heart almost jumped from its place when he saw the little switch engine back up to shift some cars, and he wondered where he would ride.

But the kind man in charge took him to the station agent, who, when he found where the boy wanted to go, looked with amazement at his coarse shoes, homespun "jeans," and cheap hat, and wondered how he would look in a city. However, the agent knew little more about the distant city than did John; but when he told John that it took almost four times as much money as he had to get there, the boy said: "Well, gimme er ticket ez fer ez it'll go." At ten o'clock that night he boarded his first train, and in about twenty-four hours left it. What thrilling sensations crept over him as the roar of the locomotive, together with the thought of leaving home, came to him! But he was going where he could be made to open up like the corn in the spring. He slept but little that first night, and the second night his ticket had all been used. Fortunately his mother had given him ample rations and he yet had food. Fortunately again, he was put off at a small country station in a fine farming country. Undismayed, he set out to walk the highway that led along the railroad. When he became tired, he crept into a convenient haystack, and with that and the friendly stars for covering, he slept the sleep of wearied youth until the bright morning sun awoke him just as the farmer and his hired men were going to

harvest the corn. Many generations of mountain dwellers had made him unafraid in the dark, but he did shrink from strangers. However, the friendly farmer bade him go to the house for a warm breakfast and asked him to work a day or two. But these lengthened into weeks, and when the farmer's busy work was over John had enough money to take him more than another day's journey, which brought him to within less than one hundred and fifty miles of his destination.

Still undaunted, he trudged the rest of the way, and made more than thirty miles a day, too.

Arriving at the little city one bright noonday in late autumn, for the seasons are earlier there than in the Southern mountains, he inquired of a street man the way to the college. The citizen eyed the newcomer in a curious sort of way. Well, he did look a little odd. In the five weeks since he left home he had had no change of top clothes. His brown "jeans" and cowhide shoes, homemade, were beginning to look the worse for the wear. He looked almost as unpromising as did Benjamin Franklin when he appeared in the streets of Philadelphia and met Deborah Reed more than one hundred years before. But he was just as courageous as was Franklin.

Finding his way into the college, he was soon shown how wholly unprepared he was for the work there. But the professor who gave him this information remembered that other students had come from these Southern mountains. In fact, he remembered Johnson. He did not look at the well-worn garments, nor the mass of hair, nor the rough, bony hands, but rather he saw the keenness of the boy's eyes and thought there might be a future to him. He then told him of the city public schools, and even if he had no money a way could be made. Soon a home was found for him with a wealthy merchant, with whom he had his living for the chores. In a comparatively brief time he finished the public-school course, then the preparatory course, and was admitted to college.

With the courage that comes from one success after another, he finished his college course with honors that meant even more than honorable mention. His class standing exempted him from examination and likewise graduated him as valedictorian. Like Horace Maynard, who won fame and greatness in the region from which our hero migrated, he seemed to have unconsciously written high up on the wall of his room the letter "V," and lived to see it grow into the highest honor a class

might give or a college bestow. His years back in the mountains had given him powers of endurance, and his simple life had endowed him with qualities of mental growth almost unparalleled among the student body whose association and companionship he so greatly relished and enjoyed.

But his busy, studious days had not kept him from some diversions that might develop another side of his nature—a side which we all seem to possess, whether rich or poor, bond or free, peasant or noble. Coming of a race noted for their far-seeing statesmanship and combative qualities developed by long, long ages of fighting in defense of home and native land, he was ever ready for that which would try his mettle. In the college town there lived a very wealthy man whose beautiful daughter was a classmate of our timid and backward friend. But her beauty did not escape his eye, trained as it was more for the squirrel and the inhabitant of the forest than for the beauty of the city. When out of college and into the law school in the same town, he did not forget this fair daughter of a noble house; yet he hardly dared approach the sacred precincts of her palatial home. A quiet turn of the wheel of fortune—and it will turn quickly now and then—gave him an unexpected relationship.

One day a company of men and women—the social set to which he was admitted because of his college worth rather than his own desire for such—were discussing the politics of the day. The issue was whether or not the people of the commonwealth would permit their present Congressman to continue in office with all the charges of graft clinging to him. All admitted his defeat desirable, but none dared to “bell the cat.” He had been in power for years; the “ring” organization and office holders were behind him. As if sending a challenge to a knight of the olden time, the fair-eyed damsel turned to the young man fresh from the dewy mountains and said: “You can beat him.” Like the valorous knight of old, he picked up the gauntlet where she had thrown it down, for he thought he saw more than a mere challenge to win a seat in Congress; and he did.

It was a long, hard-fought battle, with the odds against him. But he drew from his fine reserve of brain and health, plus a college training, to all of which was added the luster in the eye and the roses in the cheek of the fair young girl who had thrown down the gauntlet. And he won. It was more than a place in the councils of a great nation that was his prize on that victorious day. Keeping tune to the plaudits of friends and admirers

on the happy day when he took his seat under the big white dome at Washington was the merry chime of wedding bells, which brought to him forever the bright-eyed girl whose very charm was in seeing that he could win and whose greatest value was in helping him to find himself in a large way. Now, often, surrounded by admiring friends, he tells this story, which he never names, but which his charming wife calls "Walking to Congress." Thus, sitting in the circle of the nation's most renowned statesmen is the man who, as a boy, dared to venture, and by so doing won what he who never tries and never braves the danger cannot hope to win.



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