

# A Man for the Ages

## A Story of the Builders of Democracy

By IRVING BACHELLER

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### CHAPTER XXIII—Continued.

"The mystery of woman can not be solved by intellectual processes," the young man remarked. "Observation is the only help and mine has been mostly telescopic. We have managed to keep ourselves separated by a great distance even when we were near each other. It has been like looking at a star with a very limited parallax. It's a joy to be able to see you with the naked eye."

"You will have little to look at on this holiday but me and the prairies," said Bim.

"I think the prairies will be neglected. I shall wear my cavalry uniform and try to get a pair of the best horses in Chicago for the trip."

"When you would have to get mine. I have a handsome pair of black young horses from Ohio—real high steppers. It is to be my party. You will have to take what comes and make the best of it."

The day of their journey arrived—a warm, bright, cloudless day in September, 1841. The long story of those years of separation was told as they rode along. Biggs had been killed in a drunken brawl at Altoona. Davis had gone to the far West—a thoroughly discredited man. Henry Brinestead had got his new plow on the market and was prospering beyond all his hopes. Eli had become a merchant of unusual ability and vision. His



The Long Story Was Told as They Rode Along.

square dealing and good sense had done much to break down prejudice against the Jews in the democracy of the West. Samson Traylor was getting wealth and a reputation for good sense. He had made the plan on which the business had developed. He had proved himself a wise and far-seeing man. Sarah's friends had been out in Springfield for a visit. They had invested money in the business. Her brother had decided to bring his family West and settle in Sangamon county.

Agents of the store were traveling in Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana selling its goods to country dealers. They carried with them the progressive and enlightened spirit of the city and the news. Everywhere they insisted upon a high standard of honesty in business. A man who had no respect for his contract was struck off the list. They spread the everyday religion of the counting room. They were a welcome unifying and civilizing force in the middle country.

The lovers stopped in a grove at noon and fed their horses and Harry built a fire and made a broach of green sticks on which he broiled beef-steak.

A letter from Harry to Sarah Traylor tells of the beauty of the day.

"It was my great day of fulfillment, all the dearer because I had come back to health and youth and beloved scenes out of those years shadowed with loneliness and despair," he writes.

"The best part of it, I assure you, was the face I loved and that musical voice ringing like a bell in merry laughter and in the songs which had stirred my heart in the days of its tender youth. You—the dear and gentle mother of my later boyhood—are entitled to know of my happiness when I heard that voice tell me in its sweeter tone of the love which has endured through all these years of stern trial. We talked of our plans as we sat among the ferns and mosses in the cool shade sweetened by the incense of burning fagots, over that repeat to which we shall be returning often for refreshment in poorer days. We had thought of you and of the man so well beloved of you and us in all these plans. We shall live in Springfield so that we may be near you and him and our friend, Honest Abe."

It is a long letter presenting minute details in the history of that sentimental journey and allusion to matters which have no part in this record. Its substance being fully in the consciousness of the writer, he tenderly folds it up and returns it to the package—yellow and brittle and faded and having that curious fragrance of papers that have lain for scores of years in the gloom and silence of a locked mahogany drawer. So alive are these letters with the passion of youth in long forgotten years that the writer ties the old ribbon and returns them to their tomb with a feeling of sadness, finding a singular pathos in the contrast of their look and their contents. They are turning to dust, but the soul of them has gone into this little history.

The young man and woman mounted their horses and resumed their journey. It was after two o'clock. The Grand Prairie lay ahead of them. The settlement of Plain's End was twenty-one miles away on its farther side. They could just see its tall oak trees in the dim distance.

"We must hurry, if we get there before dark," said the girl. "Above all, we must be careful to keep our direction. It's easy to get lost down in the great prairie."

They heard a cat-bird singing in a near thicket as they left their camp. It reminded Bim of her favorite ballad and she sang it with the spirit of old:

"My sweetheart, come along—  
Don't you hear the glad song  
As the notes of the nightingale flow?  
Don't you hear the fond tale of the  
sweet nightingale  
As she sings in the valleys below?  
As she sings in the valleys below?"

They went on, shoulder-deep in the tall grass on the lower stretches of the prairie. Here and there it gave Harry the impression that he was swimming his horse in "noisy, vivid green water." They started a herd of deer and a number of wild horses. When they lost sight of the woods at Plain's End the young man, with his cavalry training, was able to ride standing on his saddle until he had it located.

It reminded him of riding in the Everglades and he told of his adventures there as they went on, but very modestly. He said not a word of his heroic fight the day that he and sixty of his comrades were cut off and surrounded in the "land of the grassy waters." But Bim had heard the story from other lips.

Late in the afternoon the woods loomed in front of them, scarcely a mile off. Near the end of the prairie they came to a road which led them past the door of a lonely cabin. It seemed to be deserted, but its windows were clean and a faint column of smoke rose from its chimney. There were hollyhocks and sunflowers in its small and cleanly dooryard. A morning-glow vine had been trained around the windows.

"Broad creek is just beyond," said Bim. "I don't know how the crossing will be."

They came presently to the creek, unexpectedly swollen. A man stood on the farther shore with some seventy feet of deep and rapid water between him and the travelers.

"That man looks like Stephen Nuckles," said Harry.

"It is Stephen Nuckles," Bim answered.

"Howdy, Steve!" the young soldier called.

"Howdy, boy!" said the old minister. "That ar creek is b'llin' over. I reckon you'll have to swim the hosses." They tried, but Bim's horse refused to go beyond good footing.

"You kin light at that ar house and spend the night, but the folks have gone erway," the minister called.

"I guess you'll have to marry us right here and now," Harry proposed. "Night is coming and that house is our only refuge."

"Poor boy! There seems to be no escape for you!" Bim exclaimed with a sigh. "Do you really and honestly want to marry me? If there's any doubt about it I'll leave the horses with you and swim the creek. You could put them in the barn and swim with me or spend the night in the cabin."

"It's a cool evening and the creek is very wet," he answered. "I'm going to take this matter in my own hands."

He called to the minister. "Steve, this is the luckiest moment of my life and you are just the man of all others I would have chosen for its most important job. Can you stand right where you are and marry us?"

"You bet, I kin, suh," the minister answered. "I've often said I could marry any one half a mile erway if they would only talk as loud as I kin. I've got the good book right here in my pocket, suh. My ol' wannan is comin'. She'll be hyah in a minute fer to witness the proceedin'."

Mrs. Nuckles made her appearance on the river bank in a short time.

Then the minister shouted: "We'll

begin by readin' the nineteenth chapter of Matthew."

He shouted the chapter and the usual queries, knee and prayed and pronounced them man and wife.

The young man and woman walked to the cabin and put their horses in its barn, where they found an abundance of hay and oats. They rapped at the cabin door, but got no response. They lifted its latch and entered.

A table stood in the middle of the room, set for two. On its cover of spotless white linen were plates and cups and saucers and a big platter of roasted prairie chickens and a great frosted cake and preserves and jellies and potato salad and a pie and a bottle of currant wine. A clock was ticking on the shelf. There were live embers in the fireplace and wood in the chimney.

The young soldier looked about him and smiled.

"This is wonderful!" he exclaimed. "To whom are we indebted?"

"You don't think I'd bring you out here on the plains and marry you and not treat you well," Bim laughed. "I warned you that you'd have to take what came and that the hospitality would be simple."

"It's a noble and benevolent conspiracy that has turned this cabin into a paradise and brought all this happiness upon me," he said as he kissed her. "I thought it strange that Mr. Nuckles should be on hand at the right moment."

"The creek was a harder thing to manage!" she answered with a smile. "I told my messenger to see that the gate of the reservoir was opened at four o'clock. So, you see, you had to marry or swim. Now I've made a clean breast of it. I felt sure something would happen before you got back from Milwaukee. I was plum superstitious about it."

The young man shook with laughter and said: "You are the new woman born of the democracy of the West."

"I began to fear that I should be an old woman before I got to be Mrs. Nuckles."

"Whose house is this?" he asked in a moment.

"It is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Lukins. Their land near Chicago is now used for a cattle yard and slaughterhouse and is paying them a good income. They moved here some time ago. He looks after the reservoir. Mrs. Lukins is a famous cook, as you will see. We can stay here as long as we want to. We shall find everything we need in the well, the chimney, the buttery and the cellar. And here is the wedding supper all ready for us and I as hungry as a bear."

"In the words of Mrs. Lukins 'it is very copasetic,' and I begin to feel that I have made some progress in the study of Bim Kelson. Come, let's have our supper."

"Not until you have broiled a piece of venison. It will take a lot of food to satisfy me. I'll get the cream and butter out of the well and make a pot of coffee. Hurry up, Harry, I'm starving."

Darkness fell upon the busy lovers and soon the firelight and the glow of



"We'll begin by reading the Nineteenth Chapter of Matthew."

many candles filled the homely cabin with flickering shadows and a soft, beautiful color.

"Supper is ready," she said, when the venison steak had been deposited on the platter.

"Bim, I love you not as most men love," he said as they stood a moment by the side of the table. "From the bottom of my heart I do respect you for your honor and good faith and when I think of that and of all you have suffered for my sake, I bow my head and ask God to make me worthy of such a helpes."

They sat down to this unusual wedding feast, and as we leave them the windows of the little cabin fling their light far out upon the level plain; we hear the sound of merry laughter and of the tall grasses rustling and reeling joyously in the breeze. The moon in mid-heaven and the innumerable host around it seem to know what is passing on the edge of the Grand Prairie and to be well pleased. Surely there is nothing that finds a quicker echo in the great heart of the world than human happiness!

### CHAPTER XXV.

#### Being a Brief Memoir by the Honorable and Venerable Man Known in These Pages as Josiah Traylor, Who Saw the Great Procession of Events Between Andrew Jackson and Woodrow Wilson and Especially the Making and the End of Lincoln.

Now, as I have done often sitting in the chimney corner at the day's end, I look back at my youth and manhood and tell, with one eye upon the clock, of those years of fulfillment in the progress of our beloved pilgrim. There are four and twenty of them that I shall try to review in as many minutes. At this distance I see only the high places—one looming above another like steps in a stairway.

The years of building and sentiment ended on the fourth of November, 1842, when he and Mary Todd were joined in marriage. Now, like one having taken note of the storm clouds, he strengthens the structure.

Mary tried to teach him fine manners. It was a difficult undertaking. Often, as might have been expected, she lost her patience. Mary was an excellent girl, but rather kindlesome and pragmatic. Like most of the prairie folk, for instance, Abe Lincoln had been accustomed to reach for the butter with his own knife, and to find rest in attitudes extremely indolent and unbecoming. He enjoyed sprawling on the floor in his shirt-sleeves and slippers with a pillow under his head and a book in his hand. He had a liking for ample accommodation, not fully satisfied by a bed or a lounge. Mary undertook to turn him into new ways and naturally there was irritation in the house, but I think they got along very well together for all that. Mary grew fond of him and proud of his great talents and was a devoted wife. For years she did the work of the house and bore him children. He milked the cow and took care of the horse when he was at home.

Annabel and I, having just been married, went with him to Washington on our wedding tour in 1847. He was taking his seat in congress that year. We were with him there when he met Webster. Lincoln was deeply impressed by the quiet dignity of the great man. We went together to hear Emerson lecture. It was a motley audience—business men, fashionable ladies and gentlemen, statesmen, politicians, women with their knitting and lion-hunters. The tall, awkward orator ascended the platform, took off his top-coat and drew a manuscript from his pocket. He had a narrow, sloping forehead, a prominent nose, gray eyes and a skin of singular transparency. His voice was rich and mellow, but not strong. Lincoln listened with rapt attention to his talk about Democracy. It was a memorable night. He spoke of it often. Such contact with the great spirits of that time, of which he studiously availed himself in Washington, was of great value to the statesman from Illinois. His experiences on the floor were in no way important to him, but since 1914 I have thought often of what he said there, regarding Polk's invasion of Mexico, unauthorized by congress as it was:

"The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making power to congress was dictated, as I understand it, by the following reasons: Kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally that the good of the people was the object. This our convention understood to be the most oppressive of all kingly oppressions and they proposed to so frame the constitution that no man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us."

The next year he stumped Massachusetts for "Zach" Taylor and heard Gov. Seward deliver his remarkable speech on slavery, which contained this striking utterance:

"Congress has no power to inhibit any duty commanded by God on Mount Sinai or by His Son on the Mount of Olives."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### To Get Rid of Red Ants.

The following is recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture: Make a sirup of ordinary cane sugar and water, rather thin, with the addition of not more than three-fourths of 1 per cent sodium arsenate, which is poison. Saturate small sponges with the sirup and place about where the ants are found. They carry the mixture to their nests and feed it to their young and queens, which eventually destroys the colony.

### If You Need a Medicine You Should Have the Best

Have you ever stopped to reason why it is that so many products that are extensively advertised, all at once drop out of sight and are soon forgotten? The reason is plain—the article did not fulfill the promises of the manufacturer. This applies more particularly to a medicine. A medicinal preparation that has real curative value almost sells itself, as like an endless chain system the remedy is recommended by those who have been benefited, to those who are in need of it. A prominent druggist says: "Take for example Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, a preparation I have sold for many years and never hesitate to recommend, for in almost every case it shows excellent results, as many of my customers testify. No other kidney remedy has so large a sale."

According to sworn statements and verified testimony of thousands who have used the preparation, the success of Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is due to the fact, so many people claim, that it fulfills almost every wish in overcoming kidney, liver and bladder ailments; corrects urinary troubles and neutralizes the uric acid which causes rheumatism.

You may receive a sample bottle of Swamp-Root by Parcel Post. Address Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., and enclose ten cents; also mention this paper. Large and medium size bottles for sale at all drug stores. Advertisement.

### MOTHER! OPEN CHILD'S BOWELS WITH CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP

Your little one will love the "fruity" taste of "California Fig Syrup" even if constipated, bilious, irritable, feverish, or full of cold. A teaspoonful never fails to cleanse the liver and bowels. In a few hours you can see for yourself how thoroughly it works all the sour bile, and undigested food out of the bowels and you have a well, playful child again.

Millions of mothers keep "California Fig Syrup" handy. They know a teaspoonful today saves a sick child tomorrow. Ask your druggist for genuine "California Fig Syrup," which has directions for babies and children of all ages printed on bottle. Mother! You must say "California" or you may get an imitation Fig Syrup.—Advertisement.

#### He Was Careful.

The train stopped longer than usual on the big curve coming into the Irish wayside station. A passenger looked out, saw the guard descend from his van and listened to the following conversation with the driver:

Guard—What are ye stoppin' for?  
Driver—Sure and can't ye see the signal is agin' me?  
Guard—It's mighty particular you're gettin' all of a sudden.

No woman who thinks she is homely will consent to have her picture taken in a group.

Why does a man always lose his nerve just when he needs it most?

### How's Your Stomach? Any Weakness or Distress?

Red Cloud, Neb.—"Some time ago I wrote to Dr. Pierce's Invalids' Hotel for his advice in regard to my stomach trouble, which I was sure was neuralgia. I began taking Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery along with the 'Anuric Tablets' and feel that I have been greatly benefited by their use. I had about given up when I wrote Dr. Pierce—now I am feeling fine. I have every faith in Dr. Pierce's medicine."—Mrs. Dora Coleman.

If you need a building-up tonic for stomach and blood obtain Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery from your nearest druggist, or write Dr. Pierce, President Invalids' Hotel in Buffalo, N. Y., for free medical advice.

### WOOD FAMINE SURELY AHEAD

#### Measures That Alone Could Have Prevented Have Been Too Long Delayed, Says Expert.

The cost of wood may fluctuate, but the general direction of the prices for wood products is bound to rise, and the movement will gain tremendous impetus a few years hence. There is going to be a wood famine in this country and little can be done to prevent it. We have procrastinated too long. Much can be done, however, to alleviate and shorten its duration. Forest protection is one of the prophylactics. Out of \$22,000,000 acres of virgin forests we have 137,000,000 left. We are cutting this remainder at the rate of 5,500,000 acres yearly. In 25 to 30 years our supply of virgin timber will be exhausted. This hiatus will continue until trees can be grown.

In five years ending 1920 there were 100,000 forest fires in the United States which did damage amounting to more than \$85,000,000. Forest fires have caused an annual loss of about 70 human lives, to say nothing of stocks, crops, buildings and improvements.—G. A. Whipple in the Thrift Magazine.

#### Battle Won India for Britain.

British rule in India dates from June 23, 1757, when Siraj-ud-Daula was absolutely defeated in the battle of Plassey. This victory gave England the provinces of Bengal and Behar, which laid the foundation of the empire.

#### Golf's Great Superior Point.

Golf has one point of superiority over baseball; it gives exercise to the spectators as well as to the players.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

#### Peculiarities of Speech.

"Why do sailors say 'slip ahoy?'"  
"I dunno," answered the able seaman.  
"Why do landmen say 'hello?'"

When a woman pretends to be ignorant she is playing a deep game.

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Take a good dose of Carter's Little Liver Pills—then take 2 or 3 for a few nights after. They cleanse your system of all waste matter and regulate your bowels. Mild—as easy to take as sugar. Genuine bear signature—Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

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