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JACKSON'S STORMY LIFE.

HIS PROGRESS FROM OBSCURITY TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

It Was Marked by Many Gallant Deeds, Personal Encounters and Sensational Episodes—The Romance and Tragedy of His Marriage Recalled.

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ANDREW JACKSON still remains the great hero of the middle period of United States history—midway between Washington and Lincoln, and totally unlike either save in honesty, firm attachment to his country and uncompromising devotion to liberty.

He is pre-eminently the hero of the common people. They now realize his faults as they did not for years after his death, but they honor him none the less for his virtues. The reputation of an American president who accomplishes great things has to pass through three stages. While he is in office or political action, his enemies assail him with unrelenting fury, and his friends too often defend him by frantic eulogy or weak and absurd apoogy. Death silences the critics and creates a new and far more cultured class of eulogists, who vie with each other in piling up rhetorical periods of praise till the real character is totally lost, and the Jackson or Lincoln of popular and patriotic eulogy is as much a mythical character as Romulus or Lycurgus. The third generation comes, sweeps away both detraction and eulogy, and forms a tolerably just opinion. We now have this view of Jackson, not yet of Lincoln. Fifty years from now Americans will hold a view of the latter which would be simply amazing to men of this time if they could foresee it.

Illustrative of this principle is the fact that some of the most extraordinary points in Jackson's composition quite escaped his contemporaries, and have but lately been made prominent by his biographers. His parents were Irish, but not Celtic. For many generations they had dwelt near the famous "Rock of Fergus," and the "Blue Presbyterian" tenacity which is inherent in that people showed in every important act of Jackson's life. He had never, judging from the evidence at command, read the life of Cromwell or of any of Ulster's unyielding contestants, yet in every fiber of his being he was one of them. Of science, even the rudiments, he was amusingly ignorant, and yet of matters within his range of observation his judgment was scientifically exact.

He was of southern birth and rearing and truly national sympathies. He grew up in so rugged a school of frontier manner that his opponents described him as a savage in civilized clothing, and even his warmest supporters in the older states dreaded the social ordeal for him at Washington; yet the testimony is unanimous that he excelled in courtesy, was never at a loss in the most cultivated society, and particularly charmed the ladies of Washington by his suave and courtly bearing. When the heated campaign of 1828 closed, no man was more cordially hated in New England than Andrew Jackson. A few months later, by his firm action on nullification and the claims against foreign powers, he had gained a popularity there greater than that of Webster—a popularity scarcely shaken in his long struggle with their favorite United States bank.

It adds not a little to our admiration for Jackson's achievements to learn (and it is a fact too often overlooked) that he was never really a well man. The wound in his head, inflicted by a British officer in 1781, when he was but 14 years old; the prison fever and smallpox which followed, and the unskillful treatment gave his constitution a shock from which it never recovered. The smallpox eruption on him and his brother Robert was but started when they had to walk all day in a cold, drenching rain. In two days Robert Jackson was a corpse and Andrew a raving maniac. It fills one with indignation and disgust to read the particulars of the "treatment." There is a suspicion among medical men that George Washington was bled to death; it is absolutely certain that Andrew Jackson was bled and calomel to the grave's verge, and only kept out of it by an iron will and a Scotch-irish constitution.

His physicians completed their work by instructing him in the symptoms, indicating blood letting as a remedy and showing him how to bleed himself. Many a time while in the White House, when he awoke



at night with a feeling of suffocation and "fluttering in the temples," he drew the basin near his bed, calmly opened the veins of his wrist, and, when he "thought he had bled enough," called for a servant to aid in the bandaging. In 1813 his physician had just told him he must remain quiet at least a month for his wounds, received in a street fight, to heal, when he received the order for the Creek war. Within forty-eight hours he was in the saddle, although, says Dr. May, "we had to wash him frequently from head to foot in solutions of sugar of lead to keep down inflammation."

Though over six feet three inches in height, he is said to have weighed when he won the battle of New Orleans but 140 pounds. "For thirty years," said he in 1845, "I have never been free from pain one entire hour." This dates from the time when his falsely healed breastbone (shattered by Dickinson's pistol) reopened, and he bled almost to death. For eighteen years he was subject to prostrating diarrheas and occasional hemorrhages. For but a few weeks enormous doses of calomel! When the hemorrhages ceased for a longer time than usual he had that "fullness in the head and temples." Then he bled himself. Strangers calling at the White House

were often shocked at his meager form and furrowed, pallid visage. For months together he would every day reach his desk so weak that the mere signing of his name would throw him into a perspiration. Yet he lived to 78, and was tough old Andrew Jackson to the last.

Whoever now examines the case of Rachel Donaldson Roberts and Andrew Jackson with any care and candor must conclude that they erred. Despite a lifetime of consistent conduct they never escaped from the consequences of their error. Capt. Lewis Roberts was a soldier of a good Virginia family, who lived with his mother in what was then thought a wonderful mansion, being the first stone house erected in central Kentucky. Thither came another family, the Donaldsons, and passed the first winter as tenants of Mrs. Roberts. The daughter Rachel was attractive and gay. Capt. Roberts was attentive; the natural results followed—they were married. Andrew Jackson went to Kentucky on legal business, and boarded with the family for a time. After his departure Mrs. Roberts grew restless, and when remonstrated with declared her determination to go to her mother's in Tennessee. There was a period of fruitless negotiation, and then her uncle took her to her mother.

Capt. Roberts grieved over his loss, and finally went to Tennessee to bring her home. This was in 1790. There he found Andrew Jackson living at her mother's. The story that she returned to her husband and that Jackson "eloped" with her was a "campaign lie." Suffice it that early in 1791 Capt. Roberts began proceedings for a divorce. Kentucky was then but a county of Virginia, so he had to first get an act passed by the legislature of Virginia authorizing the Kentucky court to submit the case to a jury. And right here is where the eulogists of Jackson have not been candid. He was a lawyer and a judge. He knew that the charge of adultery was set out in the legislative act and was to be tried, and that then was the time to protect Mrs. Roberts' reputation.



He must have been madly in love. He openly assumed the position of defender of Mrs. Roberts, but being remonstrated with by his friend Col. Overton went to another place to board, and ceased his visits to the widow Donaldson's. Word was received that Capt. Roberts was coming again, and Mrs. Roberts at once announced her intention of going to Natchez with one Col. Stark, who was to ride thither. Then Jackson made his great mistake—he went with them. "The Indians were threatening," is the reason usually given. In May he returned. In July, 1791, says Overton, they heard that Capt. Roberts had presented a divorce. The Jacksons went to Natchez and married Rachel. Capt. Roberts did not get his case before the jury till the summer term of the Mercer county (Ky.) court in 1793. The divorce is on record as of Aug. 6, 1793, about two years after Jackson's marriage in Natchez. The rest is known. The second marriage of Jackson and Rachel Roberts took place in 1794, and was at least legal.

Out of this marriage grew the killing of Dickinson. The story has often been told. Jackson was always sensitive about his marriage. A slighting reference to Mrs. Jackson, says Parton, "to Jackson like the sin against the Holy Ghost—unpardonable." Dickinson spoke the word and was doomed. It is not well to repeat the shocking details. The street fight with the Bentons was sanguinary enough, but is much relieved by the ludicrous features. Joel Benton hated Jackson with frantic intensity till the last of his life, but Thomas H. became his warm admirer and supporter. While Benton was in the senate and Jackson in the White House the latter had the former's pistol bullet cut out of his arm, where it had lain so many years, and the Whig wits suggested that he have it set and present it to Senator Benton as a souvenir.

Rachel Jackson faded young. Her indignant husband declared that the Whig slanders were murdering her, and hated them more fiercely than ever. She was very domestic in her tastes, and Jackson was devoted to her to the last. No tongue can tell what she suffered in the villainous campaign of 1828. In these days we war not on women. In the "good old times," which some folks ignorantly praise, nobody was spared. She passed hours at a time in alternate tears and prayers during the absence of her husband. On the 17th of December she fell with a horrible shriek in the convulsions of "breast pang." After sixty hours of such agony as is rarely endured she sank into exhaustion, dying on the 24th.

Andrew Jackson was never the same man again. He resolutely reformed his language, and except on a few rare occasions never used an oath. Her remains lie beside his in that tomb which he designed at the Hermitage. His career as president was no doubt made more bitter by remembrance of what she had suffered, and after his retirement, when he united with the Presbyterian church, his supreme idea of heaven was that he would certainly "find Rachel there."

It is a curious fact that some of the acts for which President Jackson was most vehemently attacked are now approved by economists of all schools. His instinctive dread of paper money, as it then was, was scientifically correct, though he went about his reform in a somewhat headlong way. The independent treasury is now so much a matter of course that few people realize the old situation—when the government depended on a bank for its fiscal transactions. But Andrew Jackson's greatest achievement was the making of popular suffrage in the United States a living, practical fact. He broke the record. He overturned the "Virginia dynasty," and swept away the rule of "easy succession." In short he was distinctively and emphatically the People's President.

J. H. BEADLE.
Electroplating the Dead.
A French physician has announced a new means for preserving the remains of the dead which he asserts will supersede embalming and mummifying. His plan is to give the corpse a bath of nitrate of silver and then electroplate it.

THE GOOD RIGHT HAND.

Published through The American Press Association.

Words by OSWALD ALLAN. Music by R. GRAHAM HARVEY.

1. I will not sing of
2. 'Tis hard and brown—yet
3. "The Good Right Hand!" who

might-y king, Or lord of high de-gree, Or belt-ed knight, with ar-mor bright, And nev-er crown of rar-er, rich-er worth! De-spite the stains and rug-ged veins he can with-stand its grand, re-sist-less force? When, for the right, it falls in fight, Like

squire, and pal-frey free; No lov-er's glance, or fond ro-mance, My pris-es shall com-plain-ing fall on earth; It ne'er shall slark a bat-tle-day's work—'Tis thus the sweet-est whirl-wind in its course! Let all re-vere that grasp sin-cere Of loy-al-ty and

mand; But still my theme as grand I deem—It is "The Good Right Hand,"..... It crust! In that broad palm there dwells the earn of Friendship, Truth, and Trust,..... Of faith! On earth be-low, to friend or foe 'Tis hon-est to the death!..... 'Tis hon-est to the death!

D. C. *Symph. for last verse.*

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