LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

GENERAL THOMAS J. JACKSON

(STONEWALL JACKSON)

BY HIS WIFE

MARY ANNA JACKSON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

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Illustrated

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TO

THE GRANDCHILDREN OF GENERAL JACKSON

JULIA AND JACKSON CHRISTIAN

This Book is Dedicated

IN THE PRAYERFUL HOPE THAT AS THEY GROW IN YEARS THEY MAY
DRAW INSPIRATION FROM HIS EXAMPLE, AND CONFORM THEIR LIVES
TO THE SAME EXALTED STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN DUTY, WHICH
MARKED THE CHARACTER OF THEIR GRANDSIRE, AND WHICH
WAS ALSO REFLECTED IN THE LIFE OF THEIR YOUNG
MOTHER, WHO WITH GENTLE FOOTSTEPS FOLLOWED
HER FATHER AS HE FOLLOWED JESUS

PREFACE.

For many years after the death of my husband the shadow over my life was so deep, and all that concerned him was so sacred, that I could not consent to lift the veil to the public gaze. But time softens, if it does not heal, the bitterest sorrow; and the pleadings of his only child, after reaching womanhood, finally prevailed upon me to write out for her and her children my memories of the father she had never known on earth. She was my inspiration, encouraging me, and delighting in every page that was written; but the work was not more than half completed when God took her to be with him whose memory she cherished with a reverence and devotion which became more intense with the development of her own pure and noble character. After her departure, which was truly "sorrow's crown of sorrows," I had no heart to continue the work; but, remembering how earnestly she wished me to write it for her and her children, I renewed the effort to finish it, for the sake of the precious little ones she left. In forcing my mind and pen to do their task, I found some "surcease of sorrow" in carrying out her wishes; and, as I went on, the

grand lessons of submission and fortitude of my husband's life gave me strength and courage to persevere to the end.

If it be thought that I have been too free in my revelations of what was so purely personal, in that it pertained to his home circle, it must be remembered that this was written expressly for his grandchildren, who in no other way could ever know that tender and exquisite phase of his inner life, which was never revealed to the world.

MARY ANNA JACKSON.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE time has come when we can do justice to those who were once in arms against us. Our heroes, on the one side and on the other, are nearly all gone to the grave. As they drew near the end, those who had been separated in unnatural strife felt the old love come back again, and yearned for mutual recognition. General Grant, on his death-bed, opened his heart to General Buckner, speaking with the utmost tenderness of the South, which had suffered so much. It was his dying wish that all her wounds might be healed; and that henceforth the North and the South should stand together, equal partners in one glorious Union. It is only a few months since General Sherman was borne through our streets, and among those who followed at his bier was his great adversary, General Johnston, who, by a singular coincidence, survived him but a few weeks. Thus the warriors who once "to battle rode" at the head of hostile armies, now fall into line in the great procession to that realm of silence in which all enmities are buried.

In this bearing of our great soldiers towards each

other, they who were "first in war" were also "first in peace;" and it were well if they should remain "first in the hearts of their countrymen," as the leaders whom we are to follow in the work of reunion. "Why, then, do we recall the memories of a war that is ended, and that had better be forgotten? Let the dead past bury its dead." But out of that dead past comes the living present. A great war cannot be forgotten. If it were only as a terrific explosion of human passion, a tragedy of which all the world are spectators—it would have a terrible fascination. Civil war has a still more tragic interest, as it is a war between brothers, and, though family quarrels are proverbially bitter, yet all the while, deep down in our hearts, there is a lingering tenderness that other times and other scenes may awaken again.

To rekindle this feeling, if it be not the design of the present volume, cannot fail to be one result of it. It is a poor reconciliation which is obtained only by agreeing never to speak of the past. It is the very thing of which we should speak, kindly indeed, but without reserve. Men who are honest and brave have nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to conceal; and the better they know each other, the more will they be drawn together by the mutual attraction of noble characters. Besides, the four years of our Civil War were in some respects the grandest since the nation was born. Awful, terrible, it is true, but magnificent and sublime. Then for the first time the American people learned what stuff they were made

of. For the development of character those four years were better than a hundred years of unbroken prosperity. Better than all the summer sunshine on ripening harvests were the thunders and lightnings that woke a nation to life, and gave it the full consciousness of its power. Never did our countrymen rise to such heights of courage and devotion. Never did they perform such deeds, or make such sacrifices. We must be sunk low indeed if we are capable of forgetting the most splendid period of American history.

Nor would we have our annals limited to those who fought on the side that was victorious. A nation's life is counted not by years, but by generations. A generation that was distinguished by its wars is followed by one that is devoted to the arts of peace; and sons may be proud of the deeds of their fathers, and yet not think it a part of loyalty to keep alive their hatreds. Indeed, there comes a time when the great figures that pass before us on the canvas of history are so blended that we hardly distinguish friends from foes, but recognize them all as actors in a time that is forever past. And so we can read the story of Lee and of Jackson with no wish to depreciate their greatness, but claiming it as belonging to us, since, if they were Southerners, they were also Americans, and their illustrious names are a part of our common inheritance of glory. Therefore it is that we welcome a tale of war which may be said to be told in the in-

terest of peace, as it describes a career that illustrates some of the noblest qualities of human character. Believing that a generous recognition of what was true and brave on both sides is the surest pledge of complete reconciliation, I count it a privilege to have a part, however slight, in this tribute to a Christian soldier, who, if he were "not with us but against us," showed such high qualities, such power of command, such fortitude, and such true moral greatness, as to be worthy of the honor of us all.

Stonewall Jackson was the most picturesque figure in the war. Not so high in command as General Lee on the one side, or General Grant on the other, neither had a personality so unique. In Jackson there were two men in one: he united qualities that are not only alien to each other, but that seem almost incompatible — military genius of the highest order with a religious fervor that bordered on fanaticism; a union of the soldier and the saint for which we must go back to the time of Cromwell. A thunderbolt in war, he was in society so modest and unassuming as to appear even shy and timid. A character in which such contradictions are combined is one of the most fascinating studies to be found in American history.

One view of this extraordinary man has already been given to the world. In the great operations of war he was a character apart; a man of mystery; silent and uncommunicative; wrapping himself in his reserve as in a military cloak; asking no advice; forming his own plans, which those nearest to him could

not penetrate and hardly dared to conjecture, and which were disclosed even to his military family only when he gave his orders for the march and the battle. Such is Stonewall Jackson as his martial figure passes before us on the canvas of history.

But such is *not* the figure which it is the purpose of this volume to portray. The author has no thought of adding one more to the histories of the military career of General Jackson. That has been written by his old companions in arms, and by military critics at home and abroad who have made a study of his campaigns, following on the map those rapid marches in which he was not surpassed by Napoleon in his first campaigns in Italy; and finding in his peculiar strategy enough to give him a place among the great captains of the age.

But with Jackson, as with others who have acted a great part in public affairs, there was another side to the man—an inner life, known but to few, and fully known only to her who was united to him in the closest of all human relations. Of the war itself she has but little to tell us; for he did not confide his plans even to her. It was not that he distrusted her womanly discretion; but, in the midst of thousands of watchful eyes, had he disclosed to her the dangers into which he was going, her cheek might have blanched with fear, or a shade of anxiety passed over her countenance that would have set all to wondering what it meant. Only when he signified that she should retire to a place of safety had she a forebod-

ing of what was to come; though she knew not in what direction he was to move, nor how, nor when, nor where he was to strike. But, with a woman's loyalty to her husband and her faith in God, she was content not to know, and prayed only for the gift of patience as she waited for the event.

But when the battle was over, then the tidings came! Now we expect to know everything from the chief actor. But again we are disappointed, for in his letters, even when written from a field of battle, there is no attempt to describe it, and hardly an allusion to it, except in a general way, in the expression that often recurs in his letters, that "by the blessing of Almighty God their arms have been crowned with victory."

But this extreme reticence, which at first is a disappointment, when looked at a little more closely is a revelation of the man, as it shows the supreme self-command, which could turn at once from the terrible excitement of war and direct his thoughts into a channel so remote that it carried him quite away in an opposite direction. While the battle raged he sat on his horse unmoved in the very front of danger; but when the crisis was past, and he could be spared from the field, even though the thunders were still rolling in the distance, he rode back with the tension of his mind relaxed, and entering his tent, "shut to the door," and calmed his spirit in the presence of God.

Next to the acknowledgment of his Maker was the thought of home, and of the young mother with his child in her arms! The man of war was at the same

time the most domestic of men. All his heart was centred in one spot. Many who read these pages will be surprised at the revelation of his passionate love of home, to which he was eager to return, though he was never to cross its threshold again. While the world saw only the soldier with a coat of mail over his breast, those who knew him best saw under it a great human heart. Above all, to her who looked up in his face with perfect trust and confidence, that face was open as the day. To her this man of iron was the gentlest and tenderest of human beings; whose first thought was always for her; whose strong arm guarded her from harm; who would not "that even the winds of summer should visit her too roughly."

Such devotion cannot be forgotten even after the lapse of a quarter of a century. Still the yearning heart turns fondly to the past. Still the faithful bosom carries within it a great memory and a great affection. As she looks back through the mist of years, she sees not the military hero, the idol of the army, riding down the line of battle, but the husband of her youth, still the same. In her quiet hours, as she sits by her desolate fireside, the old days come again, and they are once more in the home that was always made bright by the sunshine of his presence. They sit round the old hearthstone, and kneel together in prayer, and walk to the house of God in company.

Filled with such memories, it is but the impulse of loyalty to the dead that she should wish that others

should know him whose name she bears as she knew him; that the world should appreciate not only the soldier, but the man; that they should know all the gentleness and the tenderness that were in that lion heart. This is revealed nowhere so fully as in his letters to her during the war, which those who have been permitted to see them privately have earnestly requested to have given to the public. If to any they seem too personal, I answer, that they are not to be judged coldly and critically, but with the sympathetic feeling of those who are themselves capable of such tenderness; and I have met the womanly shyness and timidity that shrank from this "unveiling," by saying, "Yes, you can leave it all out, and in every case you can replace the word of endearment by a blank; but every time you do this you leave out a touch of Stonewall Jackson, for this fond devotion, this exquisite tenderness, was a part of the man as truly as his military genius. Sacred, indeed, are these words of the dead, but nothing is too sacred to be devoted to such a memory." Knowing, as she only can know, all his worth—that he was not only strong and brave, but tender and true, with a heart as soft as her own, and that the nearer men came to him the more they loved him—she is right to let him speak for himself in these gentle words that are whispered from the dust. And sure we are that those who have read all the great histories of the war will turn with fresh interest to this simple story, written out of a woman's heart.

HENRY M. FIELD.

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

GENERAL THOMAS J. JACKSON

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD ENGLISH AND SCOTCH-IRISH STOCK.

In the year 1748 a ship sailed from the coast of England, bearing a number of passengers who were seeking new homes in the British colonies of America. In this vessel were a young man and a young woman, both from the city of London, but who were probably unknown to each other when they embarked for the strange land to which they were bound.

The young man, John Jackson, was about twenty-three years of age, and was endowed with many of the qualities which insure success in life—being true and upright, active and energetic, of quiet but determined character; and he needed only the help of the noble woman whom God gave him as a wife to make his home in the forest a happy and prosperous one. He was small of stature, but of good mind and sound judgment, and left the impress upon his generation of great goodness, industry, and tranquil courage. He was of Scotch-Irish descent, and when, fifty years after he left England, his eldest son, George Jackson,

was a member of Congress at the same time that Andrew Jackson was Senator from Tennessee, they found, on comparing notes, that their ancestors came from the same parish near Londonderry.

Elizabeth Cummins, the young woman who was the fellow-passenger of John Jackson, was a handsome blonde, with the stature of a man, six feet in height, and as remarkable for strength of intellect as for beauty and physical vigor. She was well educated, her father having been in sufficiently easy circumstances to own and rent out a public-house in London called "The Bold Dragoon," from which he derived a good income, and he was supposed to own landed estates in Ireland. After his death, his widow married her brother-in-law—a marriage which was so repulsive to her daughter that she could not become reconciled to it. Her step-father, who was also her uncle, one day aroused her indignation to such a pitch that with her powerful arm she hurled a silver tankard at his head, and then fled from her home. She scarcely missed her aim, it is supposed, for, young as she was—not more than fifteen or sixteen—she was not of a nature to do things by halves. However, the unfortunate man must have recovered from the broken head, or family tradition would have recorded his death. It was the custom at that time for emigrants who had not the means of paying for their passage across the Atlantic to bind themselves for a certain term of service on reaching the colonies. As the circumstances of Elizabeth's flight made it impossible for her to procure money for her journey, she proved her heroism by adopting this mode of escaping from a life which had become intolerable to her.

John Jackson was so captivated with this stately Saxon beauty, that he eagerly offered her his heart, his hand, and his purse, but she proudly refused his assistance. During the voyage she formed the friendship of a family bound for Maryland, and accepted their offer of a home and employment, and thus earned the money to pay her passage. John Jackson's devotion, however, made an impression upon her heart, and a year or two later they were married in Calvert County, Maryland, he also having settled in the possessions of Lord Baltimore upon his arrival in the New World. It is natural to suppose that Elizabeth was the magnet that kept him from wandering farther until he succeeded in winning her for his wife. The young couple, in their desire to find new and cheaper lands, moved at once to Western Virginia, and made their first home upon the south branch of the Potomac, at the place now known as Moorfields, the county seat of Hardy County. But after a short residence in this beautiful valley, the enterprising spirit of the pair led them to seek broader lands, and they crossed the Alleghany ridge, and settled upon the Buckhannon River, at a place which was long known as Jackson's Fort, but is now the little village of Buckhannon. Here, surrounded by the Indian tribes, who were still contending with the whites for the possession of the lands, the settlers were often attacked by these treacherous foes. For their protection the whites were compelled to build stockade forts, to which they fled with their families in times of danger. Tradition has preserved many instances of the intrepid spirit which Elizabeth Jackson displayed on these occasions. She never quailed at the sound of the war-whoop, and her

voice was heard, not only in soothing and cheering the women and children, but in inspiring the men to heroic resistance.

When the American Revolution broke out in 1775, John Jackson and his older sons bore their part in it as soldiers, and at its close returned to their homes and devoted themselves to the improvement of their fortunes. The patriarch, John, and his true helpmeet, Elizabeth, by their sagacity and industry acquired the most valuable lands of the country, and were enabled to endow each one of their eight children with a farm. Indeed, it is said that several patents are still in existence, transmitted to Elizabeth Jackson, in her own name—lands which proved valuable property to her descendants. Their eldest son was Colonel George Jackson, who lived at Clarksburg, Harrison County, and who received his title in the Revolutionary war. He represented his State in the General Assembly of Virginia, and also in Congress. After the death of his father he removed to Zanesville, Ohio, where he spent the remainder of his life.

The second son was Edward, the grandfather of the subject of this memoir. He made his home in Lewis County, about four miles from the village of Weston, and was a vigorous and energetic man, esteemed and beloved, and for a long time was surveyor of that region of country—a business that was very lucrative in those early days, and he acquired a large estate. He first married a Miss Hadden, by whom he had three sons, George, David, and Jonathan, and three daughters, of whom one married a man named White, and the other two married brothers of the name of Brake.

A second marriage added to his family nine more

sons and daughters, among whom was Cummins, the kind half-uncle who befriended Thomas J. Jackson in his youth, and the only one, so far as we know, that had much to do with his early life.

In their declining years the old couple, John and Elizabeth Jackson, removed to the town of Clarksburg, to be near their eldest son, George, and the death of the aged sire is thus described by his grandson, John G. Jackson, in a letter to Mrs. President Madison, whose sister he had married in 1801:

"Death, on the 25th of September, put a period to the existence of my aged grandfather, John Jackson, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. The long life of this good man was spent in those noble and virtuous pursuits which endear men to their acquaintance, and make their decease sincerely regretted by all the good and virtuous. He was a native of England, and migrated hither in the year 1748. He took an active part in the Revolutionary war in favor of independence, and, upon the establishment of it, returned to his farming, which he laboriously pursued until the marriage of his youngest son, when he was prevailed upon by my father to come and reside near him; there he lived several years with his wife, enjoying all his mental faculties and great corporeal strength, until a few days before his death. I saw him breathe his last in the arms of my aged grandmother, and can truly add, that to live and die as he did would be the excess of happiness. He left a valuable estate at the entire disposal of the widow, with the concurrence of all the natural heirs, as his liberality had been amply experienced by them all in his lifetime."

The stout-hearted wife of his youth survived him until 1825, living to the extreme age of *one hundred and five years!* A great-granddaughter describes her at the age of a century as being well preserved and very interesting, and greatly beloved and revered by her long line of descendants.

By her rare physical and intellectual stamina, this remarkable woman was fitted to be the mother of a strong and noble race; and those of her descendants who have met with any success in life have shown the same clear intellect, sterling integrity, and force of will. The house of Jackson has much to be thankful for in both of these pioneer progenitors, for John Jackson himself, according to tradition, was the equal of his wife in uprightness, energy, and courage. General Jackson always had a pride in his ancestry, and wished that the high character of the fathers should be perpetuated in their descendants. Before the war, when one of his relatives was a candidate for some political office, he took the liveliest interest in his election, and wrote several letters in his behalf, one to his cousin, Judge William L. Jackson (at that time Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia), urging his support, and saying: "I am most anxious to see our family enjoying that high standard and influence which it possessed in days of yore." He always said his Jackson relations were very clannish, and he himself was warm in his family attachments, taking an interest in every worthy person who had a drop of his blood in his veins.

One of the most distinguished sons of the house was John G. Jackson, of Clarksburg, the eldest son of Colonel George Jackson. He was an eminent lawyer, succeeded his father in Congress, and was appointed

the first Federal Judge of the Western District of Virginia. He married Miss Payne, sister of "pretty Dolly Madison," the much-admired wife of President James Madison.* A second wife was the only daughter of Governor Meigs, of Ohio. He died in the prime of life in the same year with his venerable grandmother, 1825, aged forty-eight years.

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* The following letter from Mrs. President Madison to Judge Jackson, expressing herself in regard to the illness of her sister (his wife), will be of interest:

"WASHINGTON, D. C., January 12th, 1807.

"Oh, my dear brother, your letter has plunged me in the deepest distress! What can I do for that beloved sister whose image and whose sufferings, I can say with truth, have never for an hour been absent from my mind? Week after week have I looked and prepared to receive and to nurse my dear Polly, and now, alas! she is too ill [for me] to expect at all. I have consulted everybody, my dear Jackson, whose judgment I could trust, and have been flattered with the hope, from them and my own opinion, that she would get well. Oh that Heaven may spare her to you and to us, my brother!

"I send you Doctor Jones's letter, whom I have seen and conversed with a great deal.—You cannot doubt your sister's love for you, and her soul-felt sympathy.

"Hasten to tell me your hopes are revived, and that I may yet see you leading to us my precious sister and your children. How dreary, how forlorn, does this world appear without you all! I cannot express to you the desolation that seems to surround me since I received yours of the 7th.

"All here is bustle and confusion, on account of Rose's arrival, the quarrels in Congress, and the multitude of strangers; but it falls upon my senses like the gloom of death!

"I hope Mr. Madison will get time to write to you. I feel scarcely able to hold my pen. Prepare for the next post, and tell me of your sweet little Mary also.

"Ever your affectionate sister, DOLLY P. MADISON.

"Anna is well, and feels for you as she ought. Adieu."

The other sons of Colonel George were Edward, a physician; William L., a lawyer, and father of the judge of the same name (now living in Louisville, Ky.); and George Washington, the father of Colonel Alfred H. Jackson, who was a staff-officer of General Jackson, was mortally wounded at the battle of Cedar Run, and lies buried near his beloved commander in the cemetery at Lexington, Virginia.

Jonathan Jackson, son of Edward, and the father of Thomas Jonathan, like his grandfather, John, was a man of short stature. There is a beautiful miniature of him, representing an open, pleasing face, blue eyes, and handsome mouth. He was a lawyer, having studied his profession with his distinguished cousin, Judge John G. Jackson, whose patronage induced him to settle at Clarksburg, and soon afterwards he married Julia Beckwith Neale, the daughter of a merchant of Parkersburg.

The following facts relative to the Neale family and also to Jonathan Jackson were furnished by Dr. David Creel, a connection of the Neales; and as they were written in his *ninety-first* year, this, together with his quaint style, will add to their interest. He died at Chillicothe, Ohio, only a few years ago. It appears that General Robert E. Lee had had some correspondence with him about the history of General Jackson. He wrote:

"The Clarksburg Male Academy was conducted solely by George Torvis, an old Englishman, a thorough scholar with long experience as a teacher. Among the pupils we found two noble and highly promising young men—Edward, son of George Jack-

FATHER OF STONEWALL JACKSON.

(From a painted miniature.)

son, and Jonathan, son of Edward Jackson, senior. These fathers were brothers, and among the pioneers of the country some time before the Indians had retired, so as to give assurance of peace and freedom from danger, and soon became wealthy and independent farmers of high standing and respectability. While at school with these young men, a mutual attachment was created, which was warmly cherished, and became stronger and more endearing while they lived, and sincerely lamented when they both died in the prime of life. Edward Jackson, after leaving school, studied medicine, and Jonathan Jackson read law. Both attained to some degree of eminence in their respective professions, with the esteem, confidence, and good wishes of all who knew them."

It is said that these young cousins, who were as brothers at school, in manhood became rival suitors for the hand of Julia Neale, Jonathan carrying off the prize.

"In paying the soldiers of the county of Harrison in the war of 1812, one or two of them, in consequence of sickness, did not receive their pay; but soon afterwards their friend, Jonathan Jackson, presented their claims and got from us the money for them. This was about the fall of 1813, at which time he was successfully engaged in the practice of law. He was also excise master, or United States revenue officer of the county."

Dr. Creel continues his account of the Neale family:

"In the early part of the nineteenth century, George Lewis and two brothers, George and Thomas Neale, removed from the county of Loudon to Wood County, in Western Virginia. George Lewis purchased a large tract of land lying on the Ohio River, six miles from Parkersburg, which had been located by General Washington, and left by his will to one of his legatees. George Neale, who had married one of his daughters, purchased several hundred acres of land from his father-in-law, and in a few years became a wealthy and independent farmer, respected and beloved for his noble attributes of character. Thomas Neale (the maternal grandfather of General Jackson) married Margaret Winn, the daughter of Minor Winn, who resided on the west side of Bull Run Mountain, only a few miles from where the first battle was fought in the late war. He located in Parkersburg and engaged in the mercantile business, and had a family of five children—two daughters, Harriet and Julia, and three sons, Alfred, Minor, and William. After our return home from the Academy at Clarksburg, we commenced teaching school in the village of Parkersburg, and among the pupils were three of Thomas Neale's children—Harriet, Julia, and his oldest son, Alfred. Of Julia we desire to speak particularly, not only because she was our great favorite, but especially because of her connection with the history of Jonathan Jackson, who became her husband, and the father of Thomas Jonathan Jackson.

"When Julia Neale became our pupil, she was about thirteen years old, endowed with a good natural mind, soon acquired the habit of close application, and gave us no trouble in her recitations. She was rather a bru-

nette, with dark-brown hair, dark-gray eyes, handsome face, and, when at maturity, of medium height and symmetrical form. And now, at the close of our ninety-first year, we still in memory behold her as standing before us reciting her lessons with a pleasant smile; and also in the maturity of womanhood, when her affianced lord came to pay her that homage which soon terminated in a matrimonial alliance. . . . General Lee, in his kind letter to us, was pleased to express the belief that this extraordinary man, 'Stonewall' Jackson, was indebted to us, more or less, as the instructor of his mother."

Jonathan Jackson began housekeeping with his young wife in a neat brick cottage of three rooms, which he built for a law office, intending in the future to erect a more commodious dwelling for his family on the front of the large, grassy lot. But his pecuniary misfortunes and untimely death prevented the realization of this hope. His four children were all born in the cottage, and it was preserved as the birthplace of General Jackson until a few years since, when the lot became so valuable with the growth of the town that the owner tore down the little cottage, and built a business house upon the ground.

Jonathan was a successful lawyer, especially as a pleader in the chancery courts, and with the comfortable patrimony which he had inherited from his father he had a promising future; but, being of a free, generous, and incautious nature, he became deeply involved by giving security for others, and when he was cut down in the meridian of life every vestige of his property was swept away. He was an affec-

tionate and devoted husband and father, and lost his life by a malignant fever which he contracted in nursing his eldest child, Elizabeth, who died of the same disease two weeks before her father. The three children that survived him were Warren, Thomas Jonathan, and Laura. His son Thomas, after reaching the age of manhood, erected monuments over the graves of his father and little sister in the cemetery at Clarksburg.

Clarksburg is a pretty and thriving town, situated in a picturesque country, and some of the Jackson family still live there and keep up the name with credit and honor. At Parkersburg also are found many of General Jackson's kindred on both sides of the house, who are noted for their enterprise, cultivation, and warm-hearted hospitality.

Several members of Edward Jackson's large family, in physical stature, showed what they inherited from their grandmother, Elizabeth Cummins.

One of her descendants, who bore the singular name of Return Meigs, was six feet and seven inches in height, and was proportionately strong and powerful. There is a little romance in the family about the way he got his name. When his father was engaged to be married, an unfortunate misunderstanding led to a temporary separation, which weighed so hard on the disconsolate lover that when the object of his devotion relented and said, "Return, Meigs," he declared those were the sweetest words that ever fell upon his ears, and he therefore commemorated his crowning happiness by giving his first son this unique name.

Cummins Jackson was also of lofty stature, and was noted for his herculean strength, which it is said he

proved by lifting a barrel of cider and taking a drink from the bung-hole; and, more marvellous still, that he could take up a barrel of flour under each one of his arms and carry them out of his mill!

One of his sisters, Mrs. White, known in the family as "Aunt Katie," was as remarkable as were the brothers, for her size, physical strength, and wonderful industry. In her old age, when she thought her natural force was much abated, she was known to spin upon her spinning-wheel twenty-eight "cuts" of flax a day, in addition to milking her cows! Twelve cuts a day was the usual task for servants.

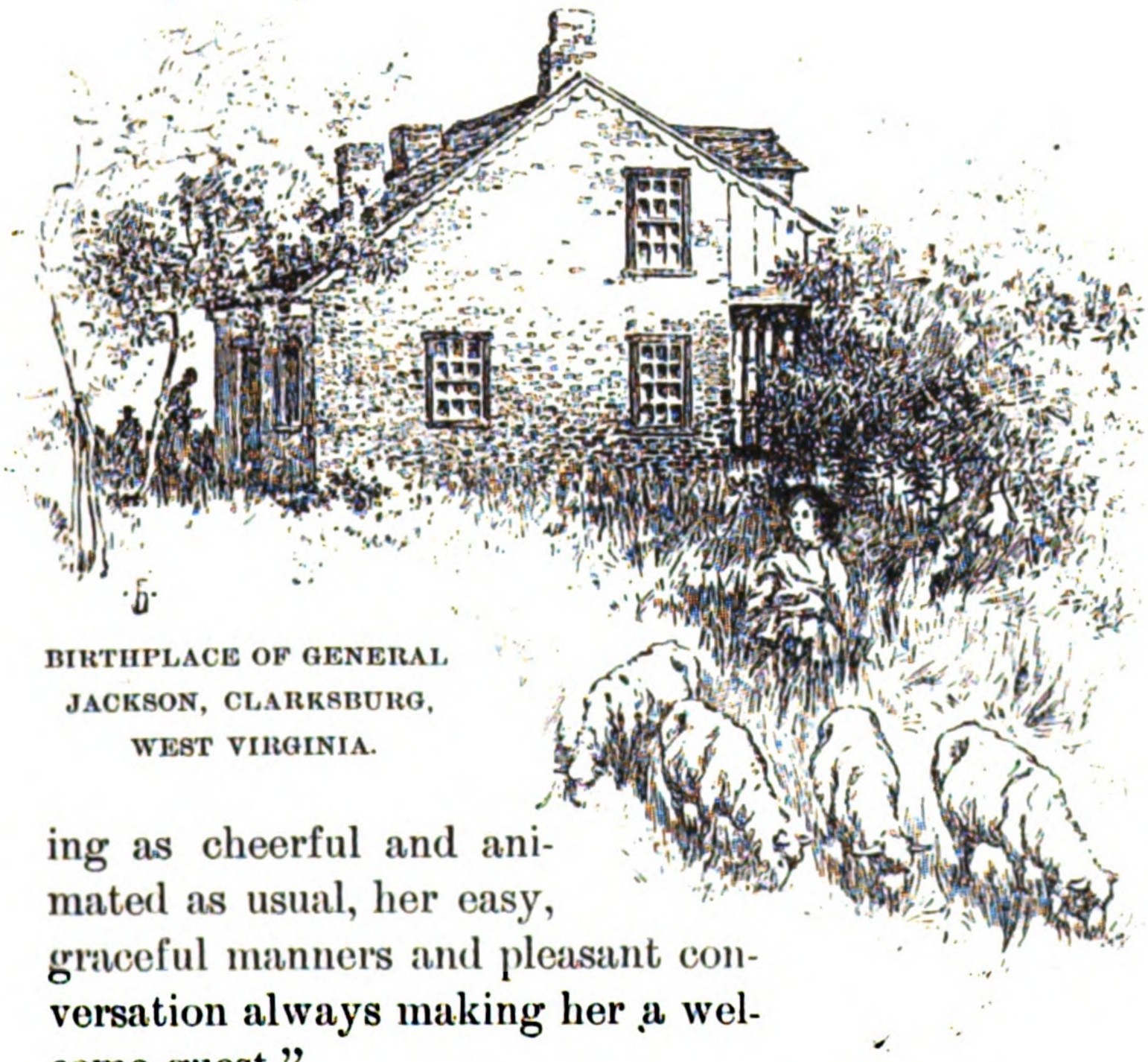
CHAPTER II.

"THE BOY IS FATHER OF THE MAN."

THOMAS JONATHAN JACKSON, the subject of this memoir, was born in the town of Clarksburg, Virginia, on the 21st of January, 1824; at least, that was the supposed date of his birth, for in consequence of the early breaking-up of his father's family no record of the event was ever found, and he did not remember dates with accuracy. Clarksburg is now in the State of West Virginia; but as he did not live to see the Old Dominion so cruelly sundered in twain, he died as he was born, a Virginian.

He was only in his third year when his father died (of whom he was too young to have any remembrance), and his mother was left a widow with three helpless children, without a home or means of support. But her own and her husband's relations assisted her; and as he had been an officer in the order of Freemasons (who had presented him with a gold medal in token of their respect), they now gave her a small house of only one room; and in this humble abode, with her fatherless children, she spent the greater part of the few years of her widowhood. Here she taught a little school, and also added to her support by sewing. The weight of the cares and struggles must have been very trying to her delicate frame; but she found relief in spending a good deal of her time with her

father in Wood County; and in the heat of summer she went to a place called "The Ridge," where her brother, Minor W. Neale, always accompanied and remained with her. A friend wrote: "I met her in the summer of 1827, in Wood County. She was looking as cheerful and animated as usual, her easy, graceful manners and pleasant conversation always making her a welcome guest."



BIRTHPLACE OF GENERAL JACKSON, CLARKSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA.

In the year 1830 Mrs. Jackson was married a second time, against the wishes of her friends, to Captain Blake B. Woodson, of Cumberland County, a lawyer of good education, and of social, popular manners; but he was much her senior, and a widower without fortune. The relatives of her first husband offered to

help her if she would remain a widow, while warning her that if she married again they should have to take her children from her to support them. But all was of no avail, and the result was what they had predicted. Though Captain Woodson was always kind to the children, his slender means were inadequate to the support of a family, and necessity soon compelled the poor mother to give up her two boys to the care of their father's relations. The youngest child, Laura, she kept with her, and after the marriage Captain Woodson removed to Fayette County, where he had received the appointment of clerk of the county.

So Thomas, at the age of six years, had to take leave of his mother, to be sent to the house of his uncle. It was a heart-breaking separation. He was at this time a rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed boy, with waving brown hair, to whom she clung with all a mother's devotion. She had him mounted on horseback, behind one of his father's former slaves, good "Uncle Robinson," of whom he was very fond, and after providing him with every comfort, and bidding him good-by, her yearning heart called him back once more, and, clasping him to her bosom, she gave vent to her feelings in a flood of tears. That parting he never forgot; nor could he speak of it in after-years but with the utmost tenderness. Warren had been sent some time before to the home of his aunt, Mrs. Isaac Brake, who wished to relieve the mother of his support, and she had consented on account of the greater temptations to the boy in town. Their mother lived only a little over a year after her second marriage, her delicate health completely giving way after the birth of a son, who was named Wirt. As she lingered

several weeks, she sent for her two fatherless boys, to receive her farewell and blessing; and her prayers, counsels, and triumphant death made an indelible impression upon the mind of Thomas, who was then seven years of age. In a letter announcing her death, Captain Woodson says: "No Christian on earth, no matter what evidence he might have had of a happy hereafter, could have died with more fortitude. Perfectly in her senses, calm and deliberate, she met her fate without a murmur or a struggle. Death for her had no sting; the grave could claim no victory. I have known few women of equal, none of superior, merit." Her remains were buried near the famous "Hawk's Nest" of New River, which her son visited in after-years, to find her grave and erect a monument over it; but nearly all who had known her during her brief residence there had passed away, and no one could be found who could point out the spot with certainty. After his return to his home in Lexington, he wrote to his aunt, Mrs. Neale, at Parkersburg:

"Sept. 4th, 1855.

"Though I have reached home, yet the pleasures enjoyed under your hospitable roof, and in your family circle, have not been dissipated. . . . I stopped to see the Hawk's Nest, and the gentleman with whom I put up was at my mother's burial, and accompanied me to the cemetery for the purpose of pointing out her grave to me; but I am not certain that he found it. There was no stone to mark the spot. Another gentleman, who had the kindness to go with us, stated that a wooden head or foot board with her name on

it had been put up, but it was no longer there. A depression in the earth only marked her resting-place. When standing by her grave, I experienced feelings to which I was until then a stranger. I was seeking the spot partly for the purpose of erecting something to her precious memory. On Saturday last I lost my porte-monnaie, and in it was the date of my mother's birth. Please give me the date in your next letter."

It was left to the generous impulse of a Confederate soldier to do, after General Jackson's death, what he was so anxious to do himself, in preserving his mother's grave from oblivion. One who visited the spot writes:

"On the top of a beautiful wooded hill, near the mining village of Anstead, Fayette County, West Virginia, is an old graveyard, still used as a burying-place by the dwellers in this mountain region. It is greatly neglected, and many graves are scarcely to be found, though a few are protected by little pens of fence-rails. The location is so beautiful, and the view it commands so extensive and exquisite, that it is worthy of being well cared for. Among those who lie buried here is the mother of that noble Christian soldier, General Stonewall Jackson. This grave, or spot—for the grave is scarcely to be recognized—has been kindly cared for by Mr. Stevens M. Taylor, formerly of Albemarle County. But no stone was erected until a gentleman of Staunton, Captain Thomas D. Ransom, one of his old soldiers, seeing the neglected condition of the grave, had prepared a simple but suitable monument—a tall slab of marble with an inscription, giving the dates of her birth and death,

and adding that it is 'a tribute to the mother of Stonewall Jackson, by one of his old brigade.'"

Such a mother could not but leave a deep impression upon the heart of such a son. To the latest hour of his life he cherished her memory. His recollections of her were of the sweetest and tenderest character. To his childhood's fancy she was the embodiment of beauty, grace, and loveliness; and when, a few months before his death, while he was in the midst of the army, a little daughter was born to him, he wrote that he wished her to be called "Julia," saying, "My mother was mindful of me when I was a helpless, fatherless child, and I wish to commemorate her now."

After the death of their mother, the children were sent back to their Jackson relatives—Warren returning to Mrs. Brake, and Thomas and Laura finding a home for a time with their aunt, Mrs. White, and later with their step-grandmother Jackson, who was always kind to them. Laura, who is still living, does not remember that Thomas ever lived with either of their uncles-in-law Brake, and says that it was their brother Warren, and not Thomas, who ran away when a little boy from his "uncle Brake, because they couldn't agree"—a statement which accords with the character of the boy. Thomas and Laura lived with their step-grandmother until her death; and after the marriage of her two daughters, which left no ladies in the household, Laura was sent to find a home among her Neale relatives, and lived with them until she was married to Mr. Jonathan Arnold, of Beverly, West Virginia. Her two sons, Thomas Jackson and Stark W. Arnold, were the only nephews of General Jackson.

The grandmother lived at the old Jackson homestead, in Lewis County, and at her death her son Cummins became the head of the house; and being a large-hearted, generous man, he not only kept Thomas with him to rear and educate, but he also gave Warren a home after he ran away from his uncle Brake. The story runs that this boy, Warren, when only nine or ten years old, left the house of Mr. Brake, who had offended him by sternness, and walked four or five miles into the town of Clarksburg to the house of Judge Jackson, his father's cousin, and asked Mrs. Jackson to give him his dinner. While eating at the table he very quietly said: "Uncle Brake and I don't agree; I have quit him, and shall not go back any more." Mrs. Jackson was surprised and, disapproving of such independence in so young a lad, tried to persuade him to return, but his unvarying answer was: "No, he and I don't agree; I have quit him, and shall not go back any more." He then went to the house of another cousin, asked if he could spend the night, and told her the same story. The next day he walked eighteen miles all alone, to the home of his uncle Cummins, who received him with great kindness, and the two orphan boys were very happy at being together under the same roof. Here the three children went to school, when there were any schools in the neighborhood, and Thomas and Laura spent much time in play, he always having a care over his little sister. He was a cheerful boy, and, his sister says, sang a great deal; but in after-years he did not show any musical talent, though very fond of hearing music.

The boyhood of Jackson showed that, truly,

"The child is father of the man,"

for it was marked by the same energy, determination, and perseverance that were to distinguish him in his future career. No matter what he undertook, whether of work or play, he "never gave up." At school, one day, during recess, he became absorbed in making a cornstalk fiddle, and when the bell rang for resuming study he worked away as if he did not hear it, totally oblivious of his duty to return to his lessons. Laura was sent to call him, but his reply was, "Wait till I finish this fiddle!" and not until the teacher went out and compelled obedience did he relinquish his task.

The children wandered all over the farm, and engaged in many youthful enterprises, one of which was the making of maple sugar. The trees stood on the other side of a creek which had no bridge over it, but. nothing daunted, our young hero went to work and framed a little raft, upon which he and Laura would cross daily, and busy themselves in drawing the sap and boiling down the sugar. In after-years, when he became the leader of armies, he often had occasion to build bridges across streams for his troops, in which he showed the same indomitable perseverance in overcoming obstacles that he had shown when a boy.

Laura followed him everywhere, even in his rabbit hunts, in which he was quite an expert. After running a rabbit into a hollow log, he would place Laura at one end and himself at the other, and in this way they often caught the little creatures with their hands. He busied himself in making rabbit-snares, bird-traps, and in other rustic diversions. In his childhood he was extravagantly fond of the violin, and after coming into possession of one of his own he made faithful

efforts to learn to play upon it, but, not being endowed with the gift of music, this was one of the few things he attempted in which he did not succeed. When a boy, he did learn a few songs, among them a military one, called "Napoleon's Retreat."

This united, happy life of the little brother and sister did not continue more than a year or two, when they were separated, never to have the same home again. But he cherished a warm attachment for her, and kept up the most affectionate relations with her as long as he lived. With money he saved from his pay at West Point he bought her a silk dress as a present upon his return home during his first vacation.

Cummins Jackson was a bachelor of middle age, and being a man of independent fortune and a kind heart, he was disposed to do all in his power for Warren and Thomas. The latter, it is said, was his favorite, and he could not have been treated with more kindness if he had been his own son. He gave the lads all the advantages of education his county afforded, though these were not great in that new and unimproved region. It was the custom to have schools for only about three months during the winter season, so the boys were engaged during the remainder of the year in assisting their uncle in the operations of the farm and mills.

At school Thomas was studious and persevering, showing a great desire to make the best of his advantages; but Warren was the reverse, and as he grew up his strong will, which had never been controlled, and his independent and restless spirit impelled him to launch out for himself and seek his own fortune. His uncle thought it best not to thwart him in this,

and so the boy left this kind uncle and good home when he was about fourteen years of age. But the saddest part of this exodus was, that he persuaded his young brother, of only twelve, to accompany him. Thomas was very reluctant to go, for he loved his uncle, and was happy in his free and bountiful home; but his affection for Warren, and perhaps the latter's authority over him as an elder brother, were too great to be resisted. They went first to the home of their uncle Alfred Neale, who lived on James Island, in the Ohio, and were most kindly received by him and his good wife; but as this uncle prescribed for them the same excellent discipline as their uncle Cummins—that they should work on the farm and go to school—Warren again rebelled, and spread his unfledged wings for a flight farther down the Ohio, taking Thomas with him.

Several months passed, and their friends heard nothing of the young wanderers; but in the autumn they came back, like repentant prodigals, glad enough to return to kindred and friends, but in such a sad plight that it was touching to see them. Their clothes were worn and soiled from travel, and their faces bore the marks of sickness and suffering. Their story was that, after floating down the Ohio, and earning their living as best they could, they landed on a small island in the Mississippi, near the southwestern corner of Kentucky. Here they spent the summer alone, and supported themselves by cutting wood for the passing steamboats.

Their lodging-place was a miserable cabin, and the island being exceedingly malarious, they contracted chills and fever, which made such ravages upon their

tender frames that they could stand it no longer; so by the kindness of a captain, who gave them passage on his boat, they were enabled to reach home—no doubt wiser, if not better, for their escapade.

Thomas determined at once to return to his uncle Cummins, where the comforts of home and the fine air of his native climate soon restored him to his wonted health and strength, and here he remained until he received an appointment as a cadet at West Point.

But Warren was too proud or ashamed to seek again the shelter of a roof which he had so rashly left, so he went to the house of his aunt, Mrs. Isaac Brake, which had been his home after his separation from his mother, where he received the kindest treatment; but he never recovered from the effects of the exposure and hardships encountered during that disastrous trip, and after lingering a few years he died of consumption at the age of nineteen. Before his death he sent for Thomas and Laura to come and see him once more, and, mounted on horseback, they rode across the country to pay this last visit to their dying brother. They found that this long illness, with the influence of his sainted mother, had changed the ungoverned boy to such gentleness and submission that he no longer wished to live, but was able to depart in perfect peace.

After the wholesome experience of his adventurous trip down the Ohio, and the recovery of his health, Thomas showed a greater desire than ever for self-improvement, and he became a valuable assistant to his uncle in the management of his farm and mills. Classical academies had not then been introduced into that part of the country, but there were good English

schools; and he was a diligent, plodding scholar, having a strong mind, though it was slow in development. In arithmetic he was quick, and found no difficulty in excelling his classmates; but in his other studies he had to work hard, yet he always "stuck to it" with a tenacity that would not "let go." He never left a lesson unmastered, and if he had not been able to finish a task with his class, he would, when his time came to recite, acknowledge frankly that he knew nothing of *that* lesson, not having yet perfected the previous one. In this way he sometimes fell behind his class; but as he had a retentive memory, the knowledge that he gained with so much labor was indelibly impressed upon his mind.

His temper as a boy was cheerful and generous, and his truthfulness was proverbial. There was an instinctive courtesy in his conduct; his sense of justice was very strong, and as long as he met with fair treatment from his associates, he was gentle and peaceable; but he was quick to resent an insult, and in a boyish combat would never yield to defeat. He was a ringleader in boyish sports, an expert in climbing and jumping; and whenever he was captain in any game his side was pretty sure to come off victorious.

In the management of his uncle's farm and mills, Thomas early learned to put his young shoulders to the wheel, and he soon proved so capable that he was intrusted with the duties of overseer of the laborers in getting the largest trees out of the forest, and conveying them to the mill to be sawed into lumber, in all which he showed great intelligence as well as endurance and efficiency.

This free and active life was well adapted to both his physical and moral development, and as his uncle treated him as a companion, trusting and relying upon him, he grew very manly and independent for a youth in his teens. His bachelor uncles, it appears, were fond of sport, of fox hunts and horse racing. His uncle kept a number of blooded horses, and had a four-mile race-track on his farm, and "Thomas," as he always called him, was his trainer, and so well taught was he to ride that he was never thrown. Naturally he came to share in the pleasures of the chase, and to ride his uncle's racers as soon as he was old enough. With his determination to succeed in everything he undertook, he did not fail in this accomplishment, for his neighbors said, "If a horse had any winning qualities whatever in him, Tom Jackson never failed to bring them out on the turf!" But though he won races for his uncle, and won a good deal of money, he never had the least propensity to the vices that belong to sporting characters.

When riding home late one night, he was startled at beholding a tall white spectre flitting across the road. The horse became frightened and plunged backward; and Thomas confessed that at first he, too, was somewhat dismayed at such a ghostly apparition, but, determining to conquer all fear, he put whip and spurs to his horse and forced him to gallop past the object of terror, which he soon discovered, from the shouts of laughter from the roadside, was one of his uncles, who had tried to play a joke upon him by wrapping himself in a sheet and taking his stand at the foot of a hill he was to pass.

This free life he could enjoy without being at all

spoiled by it; and though he spoke of himself as having been "a wild boy," he was always noted for his uprightness, honesty, industry, and truth. In his after-years he was not disposed to talk much of his childhood and youth, for the reason that it was the saddest period of his life. He had been very early left an orphan. Losing first his father and then his mother, he had no home life, but grew up among remoter kindred. All this made the memory so sad that he seldom referred to it.

One who knew him at this time says: "He was a youth of exemplary habits, of indomitable will and undoubted courage. He possessed in an eminent degree a talent for mathematics, and was unwilling, while at school, to acknowledge his incapacity—'give him time'—to solve any proposition. He was not what is nowadays termed brilliant, but he was one of those untiring, matter-of-fact persons who would never give up when he engaged in an undertaking until he accomplished his object. He learned slowly, but when he got learning into his head, he never forgot it. He was not quick to decide, except when excited, and then when he made up his mind to do a thing, he did it on short notice and in quick time. Thus, while on his way to school, an overgrown rustic behaved rudely to one of the school-girls. Jackson was fired at his cowardly conduct, and told him he must apologize at once, or he would 'thrash him.' The big fellow, supposing that he was an overmatch for him, refused, whereupon Jackson pitched into him, and gave him a severe pounding."

This manly and independent spirit impelled him at an early age to seek a support for himself, and his

friends procured for him the position of constable of Lewis County. He was but eighteen years old, and it was contrary to law that a minor should hold this office, but the influence and guarantee of his uncle, with his own good character, overcame this objection. At this time his health was somewhat impaired, and it was hoped that the out-door life and horseback exercise would invigorate him. The duties of the office required both courage and determination, qualities that he soon showed that he possessed. Prompt in meeting his own engagements, he enforced the same upon others. Collecting debts is always a thankless task, but it had to be done; and Jackson did it kindly, but firmly. In one case a man had made repeated promises to pay, but would never keep an appointment for the purpose. After exacting one more promise that he would pay, *without fail*, upon a certain day, the young constable pledged himself to the creditor that on that day he should have his money. The day came, and the constable and creditor were on hand, but the debtor was again missing, and was not seen in the village all day. The young deputy, however, had given his word, *and kept it* by paying the money out of his own pocket. The next morning the delinquent appeared upon the scene, riding a fine horse, but as the custom of the country did not permit a man's horse to be taken from him while he was on his back, the young officer waited until he saw the man dismount, and then reproaching him for his breach of faith, he seized the horse. The man resisted, and a furious struggle followed, during which he succeeded in remounting. This at first disconcerted Jackson, but, not to be outwitted by this

manœuvre, he held on to the bridle, and seeing near by a stable door standing open, he led the horse up to it, and quietly told the man he must "get off or be knocked off," the door being too low for him to go through on horseback. Thus the fugitive was fairly caught, and after resisting and begging, he finally slipped off and left the horse in the possession of the young representative of the law.

But this business was distasteful to Jackson, and he gladly resigned it on receiving an appointment to the Military Academy at West Point.

Before closing this chapter, it may be of interest, although it will be anticipating a few years, to know the end of the good Uncle Cummins, who was a second father to Thomas in his boyhood. After the close of the Mexican war and the annexation of California, the discovery of gold created great excitement throughout the country, and caused a tide of emigration to the Far West. Catching the popular enthusiasm, and inflamed, perhaps, with a spirit of adventure, this uncle, though in his fiftieth year, left his Virginia home and travelled by wagon-train across the plains, but lived only a few months after reaching the Pacific coast. His nephew, Thomas, inherited a few hundred dollars from his estate, which he gave to his aunt, Mrs. White, who was then in straitened circumstances, in gratitude for having given him a home when he was first separated from his mother.