THE LAND HERO OF 1812

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See page 12.

THE LAND HERO OF 1812

BY

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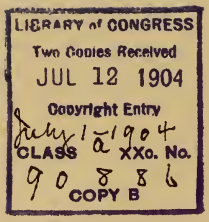

Published, September, 1904

To

MAJOR ROBERT F. AMES, U.S.A.

THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY HIS LIFE-LONG FRIEND

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

THERE have been upward of two hundred and fifty works devoted either entirely to the life and acts of Andrew Jackson or treating of the times in which he was a conspicuous figure. And it is strange that those accounts of him written while he lived or soon after his death are of the least value as possessing the least of truth. All his earlier biographies are so colored by violent prejudice or unreasonable adulation as to be well-nigh worthless.

The late Mr. James Parton has done more toward uncovering the facts concerning the most unique public character the United States ever produced than any other writer, living or dead. He consulted every work connected with Jackson, however remotely, corresponded with and interviewed

scores of those who were able to throw light on the life of the great man, and finally embodied the results of his years of labor in a volume of but little less than a million words.

Those familiar with that extensive work will recognize that the author of this book has taken Mr. Parton's view of the character of his hero. The story is temperate, unbiased, and, according to the best sources of information, as near the truth as such a work can be.

Though the following pages were written primarily for the young, they are not beneath the notice of the more mature, and the writer believes they have sufficient interest to hold the attention of both.

C. C. H.

GUILFORD, N. Y.,
September, 1903.

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CHAPTER I

A FUGITIVE

"This way, Andy—this way! We must take to the slough or they will have us!"

The speaker swung in his saddle and looked at his brother, who, in turn, was looking at a companion behind him, while still in the rear there came thundering along the red road a dozen or more men in scarlet uniforms intent on capturing the three who were fleeing before them.

Andy gave a shout and cut his horse with the single old spur he wore, darting ahead of the trio. The dust spun away from the flying hoofs in sharp spurts as the boys, for two were boys and the third but little more, tore along the road, casting frightened glances

over their bent shoulders. Those behind were gaining.

The pursuing detachment belonged to Lord Rawdon, who had been left in command of the British when Lord Cornwallis with the bulk of the army moved north on his way to his later fate, the surrender at Yorktown. The time was in August, 1781; the place, the Waxhaws in the Carolinas.

The three racing ahead were Lieutenant Thomas Crawford; his cousin, Robert Jackson; and the latter's younger brother, Andrew, a fiery, overgrown, gawky lad of about fourteen, destined to become the most unique public character America ever produced—lawyer, Indian fighter, general, governor, President of the republic, and always hero.

Andrew was being roughly schooled to future daring, and as he heard his brother's cry and noted the rapid gaining of the pursuers, he turned his powerful horse from the road and the three galloped across a broom-straw covered field, and plunged into the swamp beyond. It was tremendous work

even for the mighty animal Andrew rode, and when, after a desperate struggle with the sucking treachery of the mire, the horse stood upon firm ground on the opposite side, he was streaming with perspiration and trembling from exhaustion.

The boy looked back. His brother was out of sight hidden by the thick underbrush of the swamp, but Crawford was in a tragic plight. His horse, mired, had fallen, pinning the lieutenant by the leg, and over the prostrate officer stood a mounted dragoon striking at the unfortunate man with a saber. The fallen patriot made what faint resistance he might at this disadvantage, parrying the fierce blows with his own sword, but in a moment more Andrew saw his cousin struck down and immediately after became alive to the fact that he was not yet out of danger himself.

Having skirted the most treacherous part of the morass, two troopers were bearing down at full speed on the lad. He could hear the jingle of metal against metal, and

see the drawn sabers flash in the sunshine of the hot afternoon.

It could hardly be supposed that the youth feared death at the hands of his pursuers, but he did not depend upon his tender years to defend him. He had intended to act the part of a brave man and meet the enemy in a fair field, but the little company of patriots the boy had but that morning joined, and which had gathered to resist the British, had been surprised and put to rout before it had a chance to form and fight. Even at the age of fourteen Andy was not made of the stuff that cringes under defeat or looks to policy for protection. He had retreated because those older than himself had retreated, and in the light of his after-life, it is easy to suppose that he would have shown a brave front to the two oncoming dragoons had he been well armed. It might make a brilliant page of romance to here describe a fight in which our hero triumphed or fell gloriously wounded, but truth compels the statement that Andy again stuck his sin-

gle spur into his horse and ran in fright or from prudence, it is difficult to say which. Into the tall pines that abounded he went and soon lost his pursuers.

But he did not lose himself. Every deer path, every brook (branches he called them), every little savannah in the forest, was as familiar to the boy as the sleeping-loft in his mother's log house. Like a fox he wound through the thickets, alone but not lonely, making his way to a secluded spot where he had agreed to meet his brother in case of their separation. And there the two did meet—refugees now, defeated and hunted, and no dwelling might hold them in safety.

"Bob, Tom Crawford's down!" were his first words as he tied his horse. "Looks to me as though he was done for, but, by the Eternal! I'll be even with those fellows yet!"

Robert said nothing, but his face wore a dark frown, and he bit his lip.

"What'll mother say?" were his first words.

"Say!" repeated Andrew. "I don't know what she'll *say*, but I know what she'll *do*! She'll hunt us up when she learns we ain't caught; and I wish she would. I'm 'most starved—ain't had anything to eat since daylight."

Let us look at the two lads as they stand side by side, or rather, at the younger, for of Robert Jackson's appearance history says nothing.

Though a boy in years, and less than a boy in girth, Andrew Jackson was a man in height. He never became stout, but as a lad he was like a lath, spare and erect, but weak from the rapidity of his growth. His face was long and sallow, with a decided Scotch cast to his features, and around them hung his long, untrimmed yellow-red hair. His eyes were dark blue, honest, fearless, and wide open. There was nothing repellent in Andrew's face until those eyes showed the piercing sparkle of anger; then he became dangerous and stubborn past breaking. He would have gone straight to ruin if necessary

to effect his purpose; man or youth, no one ever knew Andrew Jackson to back down from a position once taken. He might be beaten, but he was never known to surrender.

The boy was thin-lipped, square-chinned, wide-eyed, long, and awkward, as he stood or lay in the woods that night. A country lad of the South, clad, like hundreds of others, in shirt and breeches, and little else save coarse shoes and stockings. Powder-horn and bullet-pouch swung from his shoulder, and his horse and rifle stood hard by. The latter were his dearest possessions, and almost his only ones, for in those early days in the South no boy of even the age of twelve considered himself worthy of the respect of his fellows if he did not own a horse and a gun. How Andrew obtained them no one living knows, but he was always a judge of horseflesh and firearms, and never owned any but the best of either.

The two boys spent the night in hiding. The uncanny blackness of the wilderness which chills a later generation was as home

to them. They were without a fire. As having nothing to cook, it was not necessary; as a means of discovering their hiding-place it would have been dangerous. Their sole concern was that they had been put to flight without striking a blow for their country, and that they were hungry, as boys are likely to be after twenty-odd hours of fasting. At daylight they tightened their belts (probably of rope), laid their heads together, and determined to leave their horses and arms hidden in the woods, and themselves go to Crawford's house, which was the nearest habitation. Food had become an imperative necessity; they would risk much to obtain it, but had they been a little older or wiser they would have selected the night for their expedition.

Crawford's house, like all houses in that vicinity, was built strongly of logs; but though the lieutenant's home was humble, and his wife, unaware of her husband's fall, carried a newly born infant in her arms, the brothers were warmly welcomed and fed, and here for

a few hours they rested and made plans for the future.

Lord Rawdon's swift raid had quickly and effectually subjugated the Waxhaw region, but it had done nothing toward mitigating the enmity between the Whigs, as the patriots were called, and the Tories, or those in favor of the British. Neighbor fought against neighbor, and friendships were strongly marked by party lines. There was one man who had been intimate with the Jacksons in the days of peace, long before, but the fiery dissensions of the hour had got into his blood, and though he pretended to be a stanch Whig, he was doing all in his power to direct the British troops against the patriots. An underhanded coward was he; too timid to take the field openly, but apt and active in spying and treachery. His name is lost to history. He, of all those about, alone knew of the escape of Robert and Andrew Jackson. With a perfect knowledge of the haunts and habits of the lads he tracked them to their lair in the forest, and

from there to Crawford's house, and thinking that he could now strike a final blow at his unsuspecting neighbors, he hurried to the British encampment, but a few miles away, and lodged his information with the officer in charge of the troops.

Though Andrew lived to be an old man, he never forgot that day. While the boys were eating their scanty dinner the alarm was given that the British were coming. They sprang to the door, but it was then too late to attempt to escape from the house, and to hide within it was impossible. They were surrounded; the doors were beaten down, and the two were at last in the hands of the enemy, prisoners of war, they thought, but the British thought otherwise.

CHAPTER II

A PRISONER

In those days there was no code or agreement between nations to regulate acts of unnecessary cruelty toward prisoners, and by the wild glee of the British soldiers one might have thought that the two unarmed youths who had fallen into their hands were fair game for them, important captures and prime movers in the war, whereas neither had yet struck a blow or fired a shot. With unusual violence the dragoons vented their venom against the house and its inmates. Every species of outrage was practised in that lonely dwelling. Mrs. Crawford was brutally beaten, the child she held stripped of its clothing, the crockery wantonly smashed, the bedding and furniture demolished. The two young prisoners, struck and sworn at, stood looking at the scene of inex-

cusable destruction, helpless to prevent it, but the spirit of neither had been broken. When the place was sufficiently wrecked, the officer in charge of the dragoons pulled off his muddy boots, and throwing them at Andrew, ordered him to clean them. The boy flushed to the roots of his yellow hair, but did not move.

"Clean those boots, ye young hound!" shouted the officer, pointing at them with his drawn sword.

"I am a prisoner of war, sir," returned Andy, "and expect to be treated as such. I will not clean your boots nor the boots of any he!"

The maddened officer swore a great oath, and raising his saber, aimed a blow at the head of the defiant lad. With a quick sense of his danger, the boy threw up his arm to protect himself, thereby probably saving his life. The heavy steel descended, cutting the arm to the bone, driving down the slight guard and laying open the scalp for eight inches. Andrew dropped senseless, and the

now infuriated man turned on Robert and repeated the order. As brave as his brother, Robert likewise refused, and in a moment more lay on the floor beside Andrew.

It has been stated in history that the officer's name was Pakenham, that he was of high degree, having come to America to win his spurs, and that he had royal blood in his veins. This is hardly probable, as Pakenham was but thirty-eight in 1815; but if the error is in his age and the first statement is true, it is to be hoped that he remembered that day when, thirty-four years later, and on the plains before New Orleans, he met the boy he had once tried to kill, where he and his army experienced the most terrific defeat, at Andrew Jackson's hands, that an army ever submitted to—a meeting that not only humbled the knight, but caused his death.

Whether or no Pakenham ever forgot, Andrew Jackson never did, for he carried a reminder in the shape of a deep depression in his skull. His fierce enmity for the British had its birth during the Revolution, in

which he witnessed such scenes and experienced such cruelty as to forever after affect his health and bias his opinions.

Undoubtedly the officer concluded that he had effectually broken the spirit of the youths who had refused to clean his boots, but the gold-laced aristocrat knew as little of the sturdy characters with whom he had to deal as did the Parliament which had sent him to America realize the impossibility of subjugating the colonies.

When Andrew recovered his senses, which he soon did without help, he was ordered to mount a stolen horse and guide the squad to the house of one Thompson, a stout Whig partizan whose capture was greatly desired by Lord Rawdon. Sick and sore, with his wounds undressed and bleeding, but still kept up by the fierce rage gnawing at his heart, Andrew crawled into the saddle, apparently humbled into obedience, but with a firm determination to save his friend if possible. Threatened with instant death if he led the party astray, he set out in an opposite

direction from Thompson's house, and guided the dragoons over miles of intricate forest paths, tiring their horses while working around to his destination, so as to come in sight of his friend's dwelling while yet more than half a mile from it. He well knew that the watchful patriot always had his horse in readiness for an escape at the first sight of the enemy, and by entering the clearing on the side farthest from the house, he hoped Thompson would have sufficient warning.

And so it proved. As the squad broke from the forest and charged forward, Andrew had the satisfaction of seeing the hunted man rush out, throw himself upon the horse standing by the door, wave a defiance at the oncoming British, and plunge his animal into the swollen creek that ran hard by; then with a shout he disappeared into the forest on the opposite side. Whether the dragoons were afraid of the foaming waters, or their horses were too fatigued to pursue, is not known, but it is known that they then and

there gave up the chase and returned to camp tired and unsuccessful. Andrew's trick was not suspected.

But the knowledge that he had saved his friend was all the satisfaction the boy received. Without having their wounds dressed, without rest, food, or even water, the two brothers, together with Crawford, who had been brought in hurt but alive, and some twenty other prisoners captured during the previous day, were mounted, and the whole force, with its captives and booty, started for the British post at Camden, S. C., forty miles away.

The treatment the prisoners received was inhuman. Not a morsel of food was allowed them; not even during a halt were they permitted to scoop up the water by the roadside to quench their thirst. On arriving at Camden they were all penned in the jailyard, a small enclosure, and left to live or die with no more attention than cattle in a corral. A small ration of the coarsest food was here given to them, but they were robbed of their shoes.

Exposed to a fierce southern sun during the day, and unsheltered from the chills of night, such treatment naturally resulted in sickness. Presently the smallpox, the scourge of that day, broke out among the prisoners, and soon raged. Nothing was known of vaccination at that time, and nothing was done to stay the ravages of the disease; in fact, no more attention was at first paid to the sick than to the well. At last, through the protestations of Andrew, the attention of an officer was called to the deplorable condition of the captives, and at length they were provided with shelter, and their food was bettered in quality and quantity.

Neither of the brothers had as yet been infected with smallpox, but the day finally came when they both sat shivering in the hot sun, and knew they had fallen under the hand of the dreaded and filthy malady; and here they would have died had it not been for Mrs. Jackson, who, true to Andrew's estimate of his mother, hunted up her sons. When she learned of their capture, and later

of their whereabouts and condition, she started for Camden. Some say she made the whole forty miles on foot, but, be that as it may, she arrived to find both her boys reduced to such an extent that she did not know either of them.

With a woman of energy who has pure love for a motive all things are possible. By a mixture of tact, appeal, and threat, she finally succeeded in getting five of the patriots, besides her sons, exchanged for thirteen British dragoons who had been captured in the Waxhaws, and with the rescued party she started homeward. There were but two horses. Mrs. Jackson rode one, and Robert, too sick to hold himself upright in the saddle, was placed on the other, and held from falling by those who walked beside him. Andrew, though suffering and half delirious, was compelled to walk or be left behind, and he started out, buoyed by that indomitable will that marked his whole life, and enabled him to drag success from seeming failure.

The forty miles of the then wilderness that lay before him was one long-drawn torture to the tottering boy, but he bore up and staggered along, never far in the rear. With what speed the party progressed there is no knowing, but without abatement the smallpox went on through its successive stages until the disease was manifested in a multitude of pustules. By this time the little band had arrived at a point very near the Waxhaws and hoped for home and rest within a few hours; but the fair weather, which had so far attended the journey, here left them, and while almost in sight of their haven they were overtaken by a cold and drenching rain-storm. Cold and wet are the best friends of smallpox, and the result of the chill and storm was fatal to one of the brothers. Though they reached home, Robert soon left it forever, for, as a result of exposure, added to hardship, he died in two days, and Andrew, crazed with a wild delirium, was considered to be in a hopeless condition. Had not youth and a wonderful

vitality, together with good nursing, been on Andrew's side, he would undoubtedly have followed Robert, for in those days there was little or no medical skill outside of the larger cities. The widowed mother who had seen one son, her eldest, die in battle at a date prior to the opening of this story, and another pass away as a result of cruelty and neglect, fought for the life of her remaining boy as only a stricken woman can fight. She won, and Andrew at last turned his back on death, but so far had he gone on his way to the grave that there was but little left of the lanky youth, who, in his best days, never carried the flesh belonging to the average man, though he was far above the average height. For months he was an invalid, and at one time it seemed likely that he would never recover from the shock of his experience; but the same indomitable energy which later enabled him to sway multitudes of his fellows, again helped him out of extreme physical depression, and presently his health improved and his old vigor returned.

But for all his hardships he was still a boy. Experience alone, and of the sort he had known, did not ruin the spirits of Andrew Jackson. He was mischief personified, and his mischief was like himself—of the vigorous kind. One can not speak in praise of his youthful habits. He swore—and swore hard. He drank, he gambled, raced horses, fought cocks, entered into a quarrel with wonderful gusto, and did other things equally bad, but there is no instance of his lying, cheating, or stealing. In those wild days frontier morals were lax; brute force swayed in most matters, and the popular one was he who would go the farthest in dissipation and daring. Andy excelled in both particulars. His orgies were wild, his courage he showed in numberless ways. He was a skilful, daring, and hardy rider. For all his gawky figure he sat on his horse like a god and appeared to become a part of the animal he rode. Few men have ever equaled him in horsemanship—none excelled him, and he never rode an inferior

animal if another could be had. From youth to old age Jackson's love for horses was proverbial.

Had his mother lived it is probable that the boy would have led a steadier and more wholesome life, but soon after Andrew's recovery from the smallpox Mrs. Jackson, encouraged, perhaps, by the success of her mission to Camden, journeyed to Charleston for the purpose of lessening the horrors of the American soldiers there held in captivity. Though partly successful in this venture, little is known of it; all that is certain is that on her way home she sickened with the putrid, or ship fever, and died in the house of a friend.

And so before Andrew was fifteen years old he became an orphan. Though not without friends, he was without money or property of any kind. He was also without prospects, and without more education than that picked up in an "old field school," the latter being the simplest of log huts, built on exhausted land, the teacher having only

enough knowledge to impart a smattering of reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. Andrew never learned to spell correctly, but he lived at a time when few men did. His thoughts were forcible and well expressed, as a rule, but they were embodied in correct writing by other hands than his own. He openly acknowledged this weakness, but usually turned the matter off with the remark that he did not think much of a man who could spell a word in but one way.

Here was a poor equipment for a youth who must needs face the world. Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, under these circumstances, would have degenerated into mere loafers or farm hacks, but Andrew Jackson was the one thousandth, and his wonderful rise from abject poverty and crass ignorance to a pinnacle of fame shows that a favorable start with influence and education are not to be compared to will, energy, or well-balanced determination.

CHAPTER III

A PIONEER JUDGE

THERE are no means of telling where or how Andrew made his first money. We know that after the war he appeared in Charleston, S. C., without employment, but with a magnificent horse and some ready cash, which last he promptly dissipated in wild living and became indebted to his landlord for the food he ate. Just here came the turning-point in his life.

Having exhausted all his resources save that he still kept his horse, a thing every gentleman was compelled by custom to do, and having squeezed dry the rag of city life, he desired to return home, but was without a cent for traveling expenses. In this predicament he happened to enter a room where gambling was going on by the usual method of throwing dice, and very possibly

thinking sorrowfully of all the money he had thus thrown away, in a fit of desperation he staked his fine horse against $200, determining that in case he lost he would give his landlord his saddle and bridle in part payment of his debt and make his way homeward on foot. His heart was in the game when once he had embarked. His opponent threw and threw high. When it was Andrew's turn he took up the cup, shook it and sent the ivory cubes dancing over the table. He could scarcely credit his senses when he saw he had won, but without a word he picked up the stakes and left the room without as much as a good-by to his comrades. This was Andrew Jackson's last game of chance for money. He never gambled again; but he had paid a mighty price for his lesson.

With his winnings he promptly settled his debts to the last cent and rode homeward, evidently determined to waste time no longer, but make something of himself. The ride was long, but it was full of

thougths of purpose that took form, and with our hero to purpose was to *do*. He determined to study law, and study law he did, as he did everything, but he interspersed his dry law lessons with bursts of revelry that were neither praiseworthy nor dignified. The old town of Salisbury, N. C., still bears record of the gay spirits of the young law student who pored over his books, when he deigned to study, in the shanty-like office of Mr. Spruce McKay, whose name is still kept green by being connected with that of his wild *protégé*. When the young man had absorbed all the legal lore he could assimilate, he was examined, passed, and called to the bar of North Carolina.

Andrew was not a profound lawyer, but the law was never to make him great, though through it he trod the path that led him to greatness. He was now about twenty-one years of age; tall, standing six feet and one inch in his stockings; thin and straight. He was never robust, but at that time he was not ailing in health. He was homely,

but his homeliness was that of strength, and any one looking into the young man's face saw at a glance that he was no nonentity but a man of character.

It was no small matter for a lad as poorly prepared as Andrew to make a living and get an education at the same time. The living was not high nor the education deep, but such as was the latter it proved to be the foundation on which he built his fame. He was one who leaped in the dark, depending somewhat on chance and somewhat on the fact that if he failed to land as he hoped he would be no worse off than though he had remained on the ground from which he jumped, and so, after his license was obtained, he made another leap and landed in Nashville, in what is now the State of Tennessee.

Having by some unknown means obtained an appointment as public prosecutor or solicitor for that far Western district, he joined a party of settlers and rode through the wilderness. The point to which he was

bound was then an outpost of civilization and the country over which the band traveled was swarming with hostile Indians. It was in October, 1788, when Jackson arrived among the settlers of Nashville, a community with which he was forever after identified. As a public prosecutor he was not looked upon with favor, and the office was both difficult and dangerous; it might have been fatal to one less popular or less supplied with grit and determination, fatal from the animosities he naturally created among those who came under his official hand, and fatal because of the long and lonely rides through the dark forests on his way from settlement to settlement—rides he was compelled to take in the prosecution of his business. One can realize the peril of these official journeys when it is known that so hostile were the Indians it was considered unsafe to live more than three or four miles beyond the stockades of Nashville.

Yet Jackson never met with mishap from the bullet, hatchet, or arrow of a redskin.

However, he became an expert Indian fighter and more than once set out with a party to punish some band which had committed an unusually atrocious act. History has no record in detail of any of these minor expeditions, but we will soon come upon some that were not minor and which no historian can overlook.

As a solicitor he made his mark in the community and became prosperous. There was but little ready money in circulation in that far country at that far time, and the young lawyer was often compelled to take land in payment for his services. Thus he came in possession of some thousands of acres of property, which grew in value as the people grew in wealth and numbers, and from a portion of these holdings he created the estate known as The Hermitage, which remains to-day much as he left it, being protected by the State of Tennessee, that government having acquired the title. He first built a modest house of logs, purchased slaves, laid out a farm, and stocked it with

fine horses and the best breeds of cattle obtainable, and with this done, Mr. Solicitor Jackson entered on the one romance of his life; he married the divorced wife of Lewis Robards, daughter of the pioneer, John Donelson, for whom was named the fort that became famous during the late war of the rebellion. This act tinctured the remainder of Jackson's life and compelled him to fight a duel which well-nigh resulted in his own taking off. But that was later, and we will touch upon it in its proper place.

By 1796 our hero had attained to such a pitch of popularity that he was elected by the young State of Tennessee as its Representative in the United States Congress, and there he had the pleasure of seeing the retiring President, George Washington, and hearing his farewell address before he returned to private life. The name of Washington was not then the talisman it has since become, and the "Father of his Country" had many enemies; our hero was one of them.

Jackson made but one speech in Con-

gress, but that one was effective and gained all he desired it to do. He resigned his seat soon after, and returned in triumph to his home, and all Tennessee rang with his praise. Now he was elected to the Bench of the Supreme Court and became a judge. The lanky young lawyer had progressed rapidly, for his position was now but one degree below that of the Governor, and his salary was the then magnificent sum of $600 a year; the Governor only received $750.

As a judge, Jackson was a strenuous dispenser of justice, and one before whom a criminal dreaded to appear. Justice he gave without fear or favor, and he demanded implicit obedience to himself and respect for his office. On one occasion there was a notorious criminal who had been summoned to appear before him, but who scouted the mandate of the court and defied the sheriff to arrest him. Fully armed and uttering loud and violent denunciations at all the minions of the law, he strutted up and down the street and in front of the building in which

the session was being held. The citizens were awed, and the sheriff reported the man as dangerous,—that not one of his deputies dare attempt his arrest.

"Why do you not get him yourself?" asked Jackson, the spark of wrath beginning to flash from his eyes.

"It would be death, your Honor! The fellow is armed like a pirate and defies every one!"

"He does, does he!" shouted the judge. "By the Eternal, we'll see about this! Mr. Sheriff, summons me as one of your posse; summons me at once!"

Jackson went into a white rage on the instant, and the sheriff, not daring to do otherwise, gave the judge his formal appointment as a deputy with directions to arrest the offender.

The judge, hatless and coatless, descended from the bench with the papers in his hand and, followed at a respectful distance by a crowd of court loungers, went into the street and started for the criminal with a long and

rapid step. Quick as a flash the desperado drew two pistols and aimed them at the newly made officer, but the newly made officer was not to be stopped from fear of powder and ball. He went steadily on, his eyes blazing with a fury few men were able to withstand.

"It's no use, Bob! I've been sent after you and, by the Eternal, you've got to go along with me! So give in while ye may and not when ye must!"

The criminal appeared thunderstruck at the coolness and bravery of the judge, for without firing he lowered his pistols and said:

"Well, Andy, ef *you've* been sent arter me I suppose I've *got* to go. The darned ole shootin'-irons wa'n't loaded, anyhow."

The judge took him into court, gave up his warrant as the sheriff's deputy, resumed his seat on the bench, and though the culprit was well known to him and hitherto they had been friends, he tried him then and there, found him guilty and gave him the full penalty of the law.

This is a very fair instance of Jackson's temper—fiery, impetuous, and he often appeared to entirely lose hold of himself, and apparently boiled with wrath. But much of this was in appearance only. It is true that he allowed his temper to master him very frequently, but never until he had given the matter before him sufficient thought to clearly see his course; then he went in regardless of consequences, and often carried by storm that which would have been impossible to carry by appeal or logic.

He kept his place on the bench for six years, all the time holding on to commercial life, for he had started a store and a trading business with a partner whose name was Coffee, of whom we shall hear more. Between the ages of thirty and forty his years were very full. He became rich, then failed during a commercial panic and became poor, but he paid every cent he owed. He was in many kinds of business ventures, succeeding in some, failing in others. Among his successful ones was his trade in fine horses—

blooded horses—of which he was passionately fond. From Virginia he obtained the celebrated Truxton, named after a commodore in the United States navy, and the breed of horses from this progenitor is well known to-day among horsemen, and is highly valued.

When Jackson was thirty-five he was elected major-general of the militia of Tennessee, and it was this office that afterward enabled him to fill the public eye as well as to bring out the peculiar military talents with which he had been gifted by nature.

CHAPTER IV

A DUELIST

MAJOR-GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON, of Tennessee, was fitted by nature to the days and place in which he lived. Outlawry was so common as to create scarcely a remark, and fights—often fatal—were looked upon as matters of course. No gathering was considered complete and interesting unless one or more fights occurred. Race-tracks were fair fields for serious broils; a political meeting was bound to end in a fray—sometimes murderous, sometimes not, but violence was sure to crop out before it was over. On election days men would meet in the street, strip off their coats, and get to punching each other because they did not believe alike on political questions; and even religious gatherings were not exempt from furious outbursts of temper and even fistic battles.

Fury seemed to sway men in those days more than it does now. Something they called "honor" was forever being outraged and defended, and this wonderful point of imagined honor often compelled foolish people to stand up and be shot at by their fellow man for some trifling act, difference of opinion, or insult, real or fancied. This was the duel; and a fine sway it had throughout the young United States between the years of 1790 and 1815.

The duel amounted to just this. If you say something true about me and the truth hurts me, then I challenge you and you and I fight. If I happen to be the best shot and kill or even wound you, the truth is nullified and I am a great man. This was about the way the thing was looked at years ago. I *had* to defend my so-called "honor," or my wife's good name, or my friend's reputation, showing the falsity of your statement because I was the better shot, or more bloodthirsty, or less afraid than you.

This is silly business, though such silly

business frequently ended in tragedy—a silly tragedy; and it was one of these silly tragedies that hoisted our major-general high into general notice and at the same time hurt his reputation more than any other one act of his life. He fought a number of times, but this duel must be described because it is so much a part of our hero's life that it can not be left out of any history dealing with him.

After all, it was part and parcel of those times of violence. He was under the general laws of society, and society made the duello a necessity. Jackson was obliged to challenge his man or stand before the community branded as a coward; and Andrew Jackson was no coward, whatever else he might have been.

The matter began over a couple of race-horses—Jackson's Truxton, before mentioned, and one called Plowboy, owned by a neighbor and in which a Mr. Charles Dickinson was interested. This Charles Dickinson was a gay young blade, more or

less dissipated, and loud and indiscreet when under the influence of liquor. He and Jackson had a slight quarrel over the race (which, by the way, never came off), and after the thing was smoothed over and probably forgotten by the general, Dickinson made some remarks in public touching the reputation and virtue of the general's wife. This was the spark which fired the powder of Jackson's temper. A slur cast on his wife was the deadliest insult to him and one which he would have died to resent. It is only fair to say that Dickinson spoke falsely about the lady, for Mrs. Jackson was a woman above reproach; all who knew her loved her for her high qualities and her good sense. From his courtship until the day of her death Jackson was always her chivalrous lover, courtly and kind, and though the lady was not greatly favored in form or feature, her husband exacted the utmost respect to her.

Aspersions on her character from a man like Dickinson brought Jackson to the white

heat of his wrath; his Scotch-Irish blood boiled over, and he challenged the offender to mortal combat; just as if the killing of one or the other would settle the rights and wrongs of the question.

Dickinson, being the challenged party, had the choice of weapons, and as he was reputed to be the best shot in Tennessee, he promptly chose pistols and openly boasted that he would put his ball through the heart of his opponent. The duel was to take place on Friday—fateful day—May 30, 1806, and the spot chosen for this exhibition of hatred was over the Kentucky line and in the forest on the banks of the Red River. It was a day's horseback ride from Nashville.

For all that his antagonist was a dead shot with the weapon selected, Jackson did not quail from the meeting, although his demeanor held less assurance than that which marked his opponent. The two principals started Thursday morning for the rendezvous, each accompanied by a number of

chosen friends. The Dickinson party made a gala time of their journey and, it is asserted, Dickinson, himself, gave frequent and varied exhibitions of his skill with the pistol, perhaps to intimidate his antagonist, who was behind him, perhaps to gain confidence in his own powers. There is little doubt, however, that Dickinson looked upon the matter of Jackson's death as a foregone conclusion and was cruelly coquetting with the feelings of his intended victim when he directed that there be shown to the Jackson party a string which he had cut with a bullet from a distance of twenty-four feet, and a silver dollar on which were the marks of four bullets fired from the same distance at the word of command.

But he little knew of the iron nerve of the man he attempted to frighten, nor considered the calm judgment and generalship of Jackson's second, General Thomas Overton, an old Revolutionary soldier and one perfectly familiar with the laws and tricks of dueling. That night Jackson ate a hearty

supper and smoked his long pipe, as was his habit, while over the latter principal and second discussed a number of fine points which, probably, had not been thought of by the others.

The mode of procedure, as already arranged, was a little unusual and seemed to favor Dickinson, whose quickness in aim was as remarkable as his accuracy. The two combatants were to stand face to face with pistols in hand but with their arms hanging at their sides. At the word of command they were to raise their weapons, aim and fire, each to have one shot. For Jackson to raise his pistol and aim and fire ahead of Dickinson was thought to be impossible, and the two smoking cronies discussed this matter over their pipes and glasses and decided to *allow Dickinson to have the first shot.* If some recent statements are true they schemed further and more to the purpose. Jackson's figure was tall and exceedingly spare, and his long, loose coat tended to make him appear taller than he was. If

reports are trustworthy, the foxy second of the future President of the United States now determined that Dickinson should be deceived as to the exact whereabouts of that heart through which he had promised to put his pistol ball. The long, loose coat was to be buttoned closely from waist to chin, but beneath it was to be placed sufficient stuffing of some sort to make the general's figure more rotund and better proportioned to his height. Nothing was to be put between his body and the ball he looked for, as he stood with his right side exposed, but the front profile of his figure was to be expanded and rounded with padding. How fair this was, according to the laws of dueling, let others decide, but that it was done admits of little doubt, and additional color is given to it from the fact that Dickinson, for all his well-known skill, was to be allowed to have the first shot unmolested. The deception was made possible from the circumstance that neither of the duelists had seen each other for over a year; their quarrel had been at

arm's length, the whole trouble resting on correspondence and hearsay reports carried by tale-bearers. It was pretty small business for men of sense and reputation.

After thus settling affairs principal and second separated and went to bed. Jackson slept soundly; how Dickinson passed the night is not known, but he probably was not troubled by a lack of confidence in the result of the meeting on the morrow.

That morrow dawned bright and beautiful, and Jackson, with General Overton and a surgeon, left the party which had accompanied them and repaired to the chosen ground. If the coming hero of New Orleans felt any trepidation he certainly did not show it. He smiled pleasantly (and his smile was very attractive) as, shaking each of his departing friends by the hand, he observed that there was nothing alarming in the situation. "I shall wing him, never fear," was his last remark as he turned from them.

The grand old woods that witnessed this bloody affair are now gone and cultivated

fields stretch away on either hand, but then the somber arches of the forest sifted the gay May sunlight and sent it dancing over the mossy ground. It was a hideous thing to disrupt nature's benign rule by there bringing to a focus the hatred of two men.

From the time he approached the dueling ground Jackson never spoke until the affair was over. All was politeness when the opposing parties met, the principals remaining apart. The preliminaries had been pretty thoroughly arranged beforehand, and nothing was left to preface the socially legalized murder but to choose for position and choose who should give the word. The choice of position was won by Dickinson's second, that of giving the word to fire by General Overton, and at once the two combatants were placed in position, pistols in hand. Dickinson, though slightly pale, looked confident and smiling; Jackson stood like a carved statue, somber, erect, and to all appearances perfectly self-contained. His hat was off and his hair stood bristling,

as we see it in his portraits; his coat was tightly buttoned and both arms hung loosely at his sides. His right side alone was exposed to Dickinson's fire.

General Overton advanced to his place, and laying his hand on the butt of the pistol he carried in his belt, said:

"Are you ready?"

Both men answered in the affirmative, and before their words were fairly out he shouted, in his broad Scotch accent:

"*Fere!*"

Like a flash Dickinson's arm went up and flame leaped from his pistol. Jackson's left arm jerked outward, and then he brought it across his chest, but otherwise he did not move. Dickinson's ball had gone where it had been aimed—to the exact spot where the man had thought Jackson's heart was beating, but, as hoped, the deception had worked and the bullet had plowed the general's chest, breaking two ribs and making an ugly but not dangerous nor serious wound had it been properly dressed.

As Dickinson saw the result of what he thought was his defective aim he fell back several paces and exclaimed :

"My God ! I have missed him !"

"Back to the mark, sir!" thundered Overton, drawing his pistol.

Dickinson immediately recovered himself and went back to his position, where he calmly awaited the return fire.

Then it was that Jackson moved. Slowly raising his pistol, he took deliberate aim and pulled the trigger, but the weapon was defective and the hammer stopped at half-cock. As unconcerned as though shooting at an insensible mark, Jackson recocked his weapon and aiming once more, fired. Dickinson reeled and fell into the arms of his second. The ball had passed through his body just beneath his ribs and he bled to death in half an hour, without even the satisfaction of knowing that he had hit his antagonist, for Jackson kept to himself the fact that he had been wounded until he was off the field. It took him a month to re-

cover from the immediate effects of the shot, but not a word did he ever drop that might lead one to suppose he regretted having taken the life of Charles Dickinson.

Under the laws of God, if not of man, his act was murder, calm and deliberate, and in his later life it probably troubled his conscience even more than the wound troubled his body, and the latter, after twenty years of quiescence, broke out as an abscess and gave the general more or less annoyance for the remainder of his days.

CHAPTER V

A FEUD

For the next six years, or until the breaking out of the War of 1812, a war with our old enemy, England, caused by her unwarranted aggressions on our merchant ships on the high seas, Jackson led what might for him be called a quiet life. That is, he did not fill the public eye, though he was as hot-headed and strenuous as ever. He was in many wordy disputes, through which he went in his bursting fashion; he took an active part in a number of fights and acted as second in a duel or two, but for the most part he led the life of a gentleman planter and attended to business and politics, which last was almost a business for him.

Finally the cloud of war lowered, and, with his usual promptness, Major-General Jackson offered his sword to the United

States Government, also tendering the services of the little army of State militia which he commanded. He had never yet heard a cannon save when as a boy during the Revolution he listened in awe to the thunder of the British artillery; but that mattered little to a man like Andrew Jackson. He felt equal to pitting himself against any military genius of the day, trained or untrained. He was something like Napoleon in that he did not depend upon tradition or a knowledge of old laws to insure success in military maneuver; he was a law unto himself.

Being the first to come forward and having the indorsement of a few friends at Washington, his offer was accepted and he received a commission from President Madison, but definite orders did not come for some time. The war, which was never very brisk, dragged, and the Mississippi Valley had not been threatened. Jackson, now a general in the United States Volunteers, continued his calm life, raced his horses, traded in his store, though his partner,

Coffee, did most of that business, and waited for his orders to arrive, for his hour to strike. He did one thing that stands out from the monotony of smaller events; he adopted one of the infant sons of his wife's brother, gave him his name, and brought him up as his own son and heir. This was the Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, who died but a short time since.

At last he received instructions to muster 1,500 volunteers and proceed with them down the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, and there reenforce General Wilkinson, who was in command of the forces in and about that city, as it was feared that the British, having made a good defense of Canada, would transfer the seat of active hostilities to the lower Mississippi Valley. The regular army was not the power it has since become and consisted of but a handful of men so divided that one part could not readily support the other. The country depended upon its volunteers in all cases of emergency, and as compared

to the present day volunteers were few and far between, while proportionally the lines to be defended against enemies were much longer. There were then no means by which troops could be rapidly moved from point to point. There were no railroads, and in fact but few good roads of any kind. The country was, for the most part, covered by heavy forests, and troops were moved through these, or by means of the great streams that so enrich our land. Roads had to be made through the wilderness when the army moved by land, and numberless boats constructed when it went by water. Food centers were far apart, and supplies were transported over vast distances at irregular times; thus, one of the greatest causes of suffering experienced by our soldiers early in the nineteenth century was the lack of supplies and the danger of starvation in a wild and hostile country.

But if any man was able to foresee events and provide against circumstances, Andrew Jackson was that man. A picture

of his energy is so well painted by the historian Parton that it is here inserted.

"The 10th of December was the day appointed for the troops to rendezvous at Nashville. The climate of Tennessee, generally so pleasant, is liable to brief periods of severe cold. Twice within the memory of living persons the Cumberland has been frozen over at Nashville, and as often snow has fallen there to the depth of a foot. It so chanced that the day named for the assembling of the troops was the coldest that had been known at Nashville for many years, and there was deep snow on the ground. Such was the enthusiasm, however, of the volunteers that more than two thousand presented themselves on the appointed day. The general was no less puzzled than pleased by this alacrity.

"Nashville was still little more than a large village, not capable of affording the merest shelter to such a concourse of soldiers, who in any weather not extraordinary would have disdained a roof. There

was no resource for the mass of the troops but to camp out. Fortunately, the quartermaster, Major William B. Lewis, had provided a thousand cords of wood for the use of the men, a quantity that was supposed to be sufficient to last till they embarked. Every stick of wood was burned the first night in keeping the men from freezing. From dark until nearly daylight the general and the quartermaster were out among the troops, employed in providing for this unexpected and perilous exigency, seeing that drunken men were brought within reach of the fire, and that no drowsy sentinel slept the sleep of death."

This expedition never reached New Orleans, for at Natchez, on the Mississippi, Jackson received an order to disband his troops and return home. Then the peppery patriot overflowed with righteous anger. Here were the troops whom he had enlisted in good faith, five hundred miles from home. Were they to be disbanded and set adrift without pay? It was a thing unheard of be-

fore, and Jackson swore a great oath—a great many great oaths—that he would not desert his men even if the Government did. Fortunately there came an order to pay off the volunteers, and this was done, but the fiery commander was not yet satisfied; he resolved to disobey the Government at Washington, and return the men to Nashville as he had taken them away—in a body. If the Government would not pay the expenses incurred, he would take the cost from his own pocket.

The little army was dismayed at the new arrangement, but such was their faith in their chief that there were but few murmurs. Burdened by their one hundred and fifty sick, they took up the return march overland. There were but eleven wagons available for the disabled, and the general gave up his three horses to the sick, while he stalked on ahead of his men, somber and dignified, though angry clear through. His anger, however, was never directed against one of his soldiers. He cared for them like chil-

dren and sacrificed for them all that lay in his power. Mile after mile he walked, never giving way to the fatigue he must have felt, and this persistence in advancing, his untiring and uncomplaining care of those about him who were ready to drop from exhaustion, earned for him the name of "Old Hickory," a tribute to his mental and physical toughness.

It ended by his bringing his troops home and dismissing them in the public square at Nashville, and the men went their ways full of enthusiasm for the general who had been ordered to lead them on what had been a fruitless errand in place of one filled with honor and glory.

And the Government had *not* paid the expenses of the homeward march. Jackson had drawn bills against his own fortune to such an extent that he would have met flat ruin had he been obliged to pay them. He was saved from this by the active services of Colonel Thomas Benton, who commanded one of the regiments under Jackson. This

name should be remembered, as the colonel cut a large figure in Jackson's subsequent life; was first his friend, then his bitter enemy, and lastly his friend again. The colonel, who had gone to Washington, finally prevailed on the Secretary of War to look upon the expense of the homeward march as an expense upon the Government, and thus the general was relieved of the load of impending ruin. Though an act of simple justice, it required a deal of skill and diplomacy to bring it about, and it was only accomplished by at last threatening the Administration with the loss of the support of the State of Tennessee. So are men's acts colored by their interests.

Even while Benton was engaged in seeking relief for Jackson that gentleman was being drawn into trouble with Mr. Jesse Benton, a brother of the colonel. Jesse had a "difficulty" with one Colonel Carroll, and, as was usual, the trouble between the two must be settled by a duel. The duel came off, Jackson acting as a second

in the affair, but if the trouble was settled between the belligerents, it was not settled for Jackson. Benton was wounded, and at once complained to his brother, Thomas, of the unfairness of Jackson. What the charges were is not clear, but in the heat of his anger Jesse charged the general with much that must have been impossible. Colonel Benton, who had just completed the work that saved Jackson from bankruptcy, turned against his old friend without inquiring into the rights or wrongs of the matter. The general, evidently justified in all he had done and with a clear conscience, stood upon his dignity and vouchsafed no explanation of his acts, and as no explanation was asked, the three hot heads soon became enemies, the two brothers siding together.

The Bentons spared no pains in slandering the general and vilifying his character on all occasions. So gross did their accusations at last become that Jackson, who had been forbearing, finally threw aside all considerations of past services and friendship, and

swore he would horsewhip Thomas Benton on sight.

They met in Nashville. It was no duel this time, but it came very near being murder. Jackson, with his friend and partner, Coffee, who was now also a general, crossed the square to the hotel where the Bentons were stopping. Jackson carried a light riding-whip in his hand, and as he approached he saw Thomas standing in the hotel entry, and near him was his brother, the cause of all the bad blood. Without apparently noticing either, Jackson walked on until nearly opposite the entry, then suddenly turning, strode to his erstwhile friend, and flourishing his whip, he exclaimed:

"Now, you d—— rascal, I'm going to punish you! Defend yourself!"

Thomas started and made as if to draw a pistol from his breast pocket, but as quick as a flash Jackson, anticipating the act, drew his own and presented it, at which Benton retreated down the hallway, Jackson following and threatening him with both pistol

and whip. Coffee remained behind. Jesse Benton, fearing for his brother's life, drew his pistol and ran after the two in the hall. Coming up just as Jackson had penned Thomas in a corner, he aimed point-blank at the general, and fired. The pistol was loaded with a slug and two bullets; one of the balls flew wide of the mark and struck the wall, but the other ball and the slug took effect; one hit Jackson on the left arm and the other buried itself in his shoulder, shattering the bone and producing a fearful wound.

Jackson fell with a groan, and Coffee, hearing the explosion, came running in. Believing his friend had been shot by Thomas Benton, Coffee drew his pistol and fired, missing his aim; then reversing the weapon, he was about to strike down the innocent man when Benton suddenly disappeared, having fallen down the cellar stairs, thinking that the door through which he had retreated led into a room.

Jackson, bleeding fearfully and com-

pletely prostrated, was carried tenderly to his hotel, while the two brothers openly exulted in their victory by breaking, in the public square, the light sword the general had worn, and which had been dropped in the fray. Every gentleman wore a sword in those days, not so much for a weapon as a badge of respectability.

It was years before Thomas Benton saw Jackson again and again became his friend, during the latter's second term as President of the United States. Jesse never forgave the general, nor did he forgive his brother for forgetting his old hatred, but showed his animosity in every possible way, which ways, however, were impotent to injure the objects aimed at.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE FIELD

It was three weeks before the wounded man was able to sit up, and then was confined to his room. He probably was not a lovely companion during this interval. For a man of his temper, to be maimed, defeated, and housed, was anything but a sedative. He had come very near to losing his arm, if not his life ; and when the doctors in attendance told him that his arm must come off, with characteristic determination and brevity he remarked that he would go to the grave with his arm on, and with the assistance of a single young surgeon who disagreed with his brother practitioners, the arm was saved, though, like the wound in the general's chest, it troubled him long after it had healed. The ball remained unextracted for twenty years.

In the interval of Jackson's sickness great events had happened, and the mind of the community was filled, as it is rarely filled, nowadays. At that time the world was looking at France, and looking, saw Napoleon defeated at Waterloo and tumbled, for the second time, from his self-raised throne. At home the young nation was applauding Perry, who had successfully opposed the English fleet on Lake Erie, and shouting their hurrahs at Harrison, who had come off victorious in an encounter with an Indian force under the celebrated Tecumseh. These were great matters—great to the country at large, but like a thunderclap there came on August 30, 1813, an event that electrified the Southwest, overshadowing all other considerations and sending Jackson into a fury of impatience.

This was the news that Fort Mimms, in the southwestern part of what is now Alabama, had been surprised by the Creek Indians, and of its 550 inmates, consisting of men, women and children, and a few sol-

diers and negroes, 400 were ruthlessly massacred; it is recorded that not a single white woman or child escaped. A few of the garrison got into the woods, but there died of starvation or their wounds, and quite a number of negroes were spared only to be made slaves of by the red man. A negress escaped to Lake Tensaw, and in a canoe or on a floating log, it is uncertain which, brought the news of the massacre to Fort Stoddart, paddling a distance of fifteen miles, though wounded and carrying a musket-ball in her breast.

So wild was the country, so hostile and without the means of rapid communication with civilization, it was fifteen days before the news of the disaster reached Nashville. There was but one sentiment throughout the country; the Indians must be punished, the remaining settlers protected. This was the beginning of what is known as the "Creek War," for it was that nation whose violence and atrocities had rendered the extreme South well-nigh uninhabitable for the white

settler. It was really part and parcel with the then existing war with England, for England had furnished the savages with rum, arms, and ammunition, and influenced them against the whites. Under the leadership of a renegade named Weathersford, a brave but unscrupulous man, the Indians bid fair to exterminate every white from New Orleans to the State of Georgia, as far north as Tennessee; the little settlement of Mobile was in imminent danger of being wiped from the earth. And throughout this vast region families fled in terror to the nearest forts or stockades—flimsy protections at best, and waited in fear and trembling for their turn to feed the thirsty tomahawk.

The South was in an uproar. Napoleon was forgotten and Perry and Harrison sunk in the shade before the near and appalling danger of an Indian invasion. The legislators assembled at once and acted at once. They did not wait for assistance from the central Government, but before the news of the great outrage had reached New York, it

taking more than four weeks to get that distance, it was ordered that thirty-five hundred men, under the general entitled to command them, should be despatched to the Indian country to overawe the hostiles, punish the murderers, gather together the friendly tribes, and so hold the country until the United States Government had time to act. The order was to go into effect at once.

And the general entitled to command, and who was standing on the threshold of his real greatness (he had only been prominent or notorious before), was confined to his room, propped up in his chair and unable to bear the weight of his coat. Did he fret, fume, and swear? He did all three, but he did more; he acted as though his body was as well as his brain. Before the ink on the pen, which, held in the Governor's hand, signed the order of the Legislature and made it valid, had time to dry, General Jackson had issued *his* orders directing the troops to rendezvous at Fayetteville, a little village on the northern borders of Alabama. In a foot-

note to these orders was a terse and astonishing notice to the effect that *the health of the commanding general had been restored.*

Restored! He could not get on his horse without assistance; he could not wear a sleeve on the wounded arm, which he carried in a sling. Yellow from fever, weak as a child, and emaciated to the last degree, he looked like an animated corpse as he set out for Fayetteville, a journey, for him, of three days. A doctor went with him and the stops for necessary rests were very frequent; indeed, it seemed that the indomitable will of the man must succumb under his physical distresses. But he bore up as few others would have done, and finally began to improve in health. This was the real Andrew Jackson; a man who never surrendered in act or word until he laid down before the last great enemy, death; then his life had been filled, his ambitions satisfied.

The campaign against the Creeks was a vigorous one, but the greatest enemy with which the little army had to contend was

starvation. There was no lack of food ready to be forwarded, but there was a great lack of means by which it could be sent to the men fighting afield, or rather, through a howling wilderness. Much, and indeed most, of the supplies were intended to reach Jackson by way of the Tennessee River, but the contractors did not figure on the possible lowness of the water, due to summer's drought, and when a large quantity of flour, of which the men were greatly in need, had been drawn miles through the forest to a point where it was to be sent down the stream to Fort Deposit, where Jackson's hungry army was impatiently waiting for it, it was discovered that the river was no longer navigable owing to low water and the stores remained where they were, the contractors determining to wait until the fall rains set in and deepened the channel. In the meantime the men for whom the supplies were intended went on short rations and watched the river in vain, though hoping that each hour would bring the little fleet.

Jackson, made desperate by the delay, moved his army up-stream and fortified a camp, calling it Fort Strother, and then learning that a large force of Creeks were laying siege to a band of friendly Indians who were penned in a stockade, he determined to push ahead with his famished army and relieve those who were calling on him for assistance. Not only was it necessary to succor his red allies, who were completely surrounded and nearly dying from thirst, but it was necessary to then and there strike a blow at the Creeks, who were proclaiming the cowardice of the whites as shown in their supposed fear of penetrating far into the Indian country. Coffee, Jackson's friend and partner in business, was sent off in an opposite direction with a force of some five hundred mounted men, for the purpose of foraging for themselves and destroying such of the enemy's strongholds and villages as they came across; and thus relieved of a portion of the drain on his diminished commissary, Jackson, with less than scanty pro-

visions for two days, took up a line of march through the thick and gloomy forest. So rapid were his movements, so sudden was his descent, that the hostiles, who had been sure of their prey, were taken entirely by surprise and fled howling in every direction. The lately beleaguered Indians were loud in their thanks, and when they had slaked their thirst they showered the victors with tokens of their gratitude.

CHAPTER VII

A MUTINY

But gratitude fills no stomachs and the savages brought no food for the famishing soldiers; indeed, they were themselves famishing. Back marched the army, hoping that supplies had reached the camp they had recently left, but on arriving discovered that not a mouthful had come; that even the sick and wounded who had been left behind were in immediate danger of starvation. At this time matters looked black. There was not a single remaining biscuit belonging to the army, though the general had a few provisions which he had obtained and had transported at his own expense. At this trying period he placed the whole at the disposal of the sick, and though it did not go far, it was something. He, himself, went to the slaughter-pen, and from the entrails of the animals

recently killed selected such parts as could be turned into food, remarking that the whole made tripe, and that tripe was a wholesome and delicious article of diet. This he set the example of eating, and he had to eat it unseasoned. It could not have been a very delectable dish, but it kept life within the body and reduced the pangs of hunger. Through all he was jocular, but it was forced fun. On the verge of physical collapse and with a heart made sick by hope deferred, Jackson moved among the sick and well like an exponent of strength, and yet he was a broken reed in all but grit and determination. In secret he groaned in despair and spent the hours when he should have been sleeping in writing pitiful letters to those who might have it in their power to ameliorate the condition of his famishing and now almost rebellious army.

Apparently neglected by the home Government, rendered inactive by the lack of supplies, and surrounded by an enemy as stealthy as he was merciless, men murmured

until the murmurs became loud—so loud that they could not be misunderstood by the general, who, for a season, shut his ears to them. Not the least of the trouble was homesickness, or, as the doctors say, nostalgia, a disease, if it can be called a disease, not confined to the young, as some suppose. Starvation and homesickness are two strong factors that stand in the way of duty, for they sap the spirits while they render desperate their victims; either one is bad enough, but together they made a force that taxed the powers of even Andrew Jackson.

And the end of the matter would have been ludicrous had not the nature of the trouble been so serious. It seems that there were two kinds of troops under Jackson, the militia and the volunteers. Both bodies were equally anxious to return to civilization, see their families, get properly fed, and wait a more auspicious time to war against the Creeks. No man needed food and rest more than Jackson; no man would have enjoyed them more, but his far sight told him that if

he retreated, it would look like cowardice to the hostiles, who would follow, greatly encouraged, and in all probability would carry their depredations inside the borders of Tennessee. All that had been gained would be lost immediately; the friendly tribes, impressed by the act of apparent desertion, would join the hostiles to a man, and the campaign would have proved a failure.

Failure! The word determined the fiery old war-horse (old at the age of forty-eight), and he resolved to stay even if he staid alone. He hoped, however, that the grumbling would not break out in open rebellion, but he was ready when it did.

And it did. The militia began it. With their determination winked at by many of their officers, they resolved to march home in a body, starting early in the morning after the decision. But they failed to reckon with their commander. Jackson, who knew perfectly well what was going on under his long nose, was up early that day, and when the militia were about to start they were

astonished to find the volunteers drawn across their road with their general at their head. Jackson made a spirited address in which were some dire threats, but the matter ended by the militia returning to their duties.

Now this did not half suit the volunteers, who had hoped their brothers in arms would insist, and thereby open the way for their own escape. Their complaints were not loud, but they were sincere, and hardly had they returned from their too successful mission of turning back the militia, when they, themselves, determined to march homeward the following day.

All this was flat mutiny, and, according to the laws of war, punishable with death, but the general well knew the terrible stress under which his men labored, and instead of even degrading the ringleaders, he concentrated his efforts on preventing the crime. When the volunteers emerged from camp at the dawn of the next day, they found that their lately erring companions were now

drawn across the track, with Jackson, his lame arm yet in a sling, at their head.

The general was in a rage; his face was red, his eyes flashed, what some said was blue fire, and his grizzled hair stood on end like fur on the back of an angry cat. He fairly roared at his disaffected troops, and his wrath was as fearful as it was unrestrained. The column halted, but after a moment's hesitation, attempted to advance. At this, with his serviceable arm, Jackson snatched a musket from a soldier standing near, and rising in his stirrups, shook it as he shouted:

"By the immaculate God! I will shoot the first man that offers to go forward!"

And he would have done it; what is more, the wavering men knew he was ready and willing. It is stated by some who were witnesses of the scene that one look into the eyes of the thin, yellow man sitting on horseback was enough to turn the most foolhardy of the mutineers. The men remained halted, no one caring to be the first to meet a bullet backed by such wrath; it was worse than

gunpowder. Again Jackson implored his men to come to their senses, and threatened them if they should not. The front rank hung their heads abashed, the rear began to slink back to camp, and in a short time order came out of rebellion. Ere many days passed food was again plentiful and the spirit of the army was restored.

And this through the might, spirit, and insistence of one man. He had written, he had implored, he had threatened, and in the end was ready to fight in the line of duty—to fight single-handed. One man, crippled, sick, and well-nigh heartbroken at the outlook, had managed through pure determination to subdue a horde of hungry, homesick, and desperate troopers who were so far bent upon outraging their oaths as to risk the death of traitors, but who were driven back to empty dishes and duty by impassioned words and a musket, the latter, it was afterward found, being so far out of repair as to be useless as a firearm.

But it was neither the words nor the

musket that was potent. It was the spirit of the general—the eyes flashing blue fire—the *man.*

Thus ended the trouble caused by starvation, but the waters were calm for but a short time. Presently a whole regiment rebelled because the time for which the men enlisted was out. Jackson suppressed this difficulty as he had done the other—by force of arms, training his field-pieces on the rebellious body, but for a while it looked as though the whole army would revolt. Fourteen hundred marched home at last (as they had a right to do), despite the fact that their commander implored them to remain for but a few days and strike another blow at the Indians, who were growing bolder and bolder in the face of the inactive army, and who had been successful in surprising and causing the retreat of a few disconnected parties, who, commanded by unskilful officers, had gone on excursions against them. Beyond his words Jackson placed nothing in the way of this desertion, and by the following February

the entire force was on the eve of dissolution. It seemed that the cause for which the white men fought was doomed to defeat. The British were exultant, and had it not been for Jackson's bulldog tenacity of purpose, the war in the Southwest would have ended there and then, for the Governor of Tennessee, advised by many prominent men, was about to recall the State troops and leave the contest to be carried on by the central Government.

In all probability, this would have led to certain ruin; certainly it would have forever quenched Jackson's military light, a light which was just beginning to glow. In a desperate state of mind he retired to his tent and wrote to the Governor, and what he wrote evidently struck the Governor very hard. For one thing, it convinced him that he had been wrongly advised, and instead of giving up the fight, he ordered a levy of fresh men to take the places of those who had returned home, and at once a new spirit became manifest throughout the entire State.

That letter probably saved the Southwest; it probably led to the later battle of New Orleans, and it surely was the buoy which floated Andrew Jackson to the crest of the wave of popularity and brought success from what had appeared the blackest failure. Jackson was a good talker, but when he wrote with his heart in his subject, he wrote with a pen of fire; and though he lacked in style and correctness, these imperfections were lost in the force of his reasoning and the impassioned eloquence of his words. As a result of this letter, instead of orders to retreat came the information that nearly four thousand Tennesseeans were on their way to join him. Soon after he was strengthened by a part of his old friend Coffee's brigade of mounted men—tried soldiers and true—and to cap the climax of good fortune, there came six hundred troops of the regular army. Several tribes of friendly Indians now threw their fortunes with the increasing army, and in a few weeks Jackson, instead of tamely retiring from the field, was ready to strike the blow that fin-

ished the Creek War and boosted him into a prominence from which he never descended. This was the battle of the " Horseshoe."

CHAPTER VIII

TAHOPEKA

About midway from the source of the Tallapoosa River and its mouth, where, joined by the Coosa, it forms the Alabama, there occurs a bend which was known by the whites as the "Horseshoe" on account of the shape and regularity of its curve; the Indians called it Tahopeka. The river here is both wide and deep, the stream in its majestic sweep almost enclosing a section of land of about one hundred acres, the narrow part being a trifle over one thousand feet across. This beautiful river-made peninsula was in the very heart of the hostile country and the land for one hundred and fifty miles around was a virgin forest.

Here ran the wild deer almost unmolested; here, also, lurked the wolf and the panther, and in the black fastnesses of the

swamps hid the deadly fer-de-lance and his hideous companion, the water moccasin. Threaded through the everlasting twilight or darkness of the moss-draped forest lay the trails of the savages, paths of hardly more than three spans in width but worn to the depth of from six inches to a foot by the tread of countless generations of red men. These trails were admirable roads for small foot parties and the spy, but were useless for troops encumbered with artillery and baggage.

To Tahopeka, or the Horseshoe, came the Creeks, and with fine military instinct they determined to fortify the ground which had been so arranged by nature as to present but one point of attack by land, that through the narrow part, or between the heels of the horseshoe. Here they collected some one thousand warriors—the flower of their nation—and three hundred, or more, women and children. Then they began to build.

On the rather high bluff of the river-bank at the toe of the loop they erected their

wigwams and bark houses, and then across the neck of the peninsula they threw up a high and strong breastwork of logs and earth. Behind this was a thick covert of brushwood and fallen timber to which they could retire if driven in from the front, while still in the rear came the forest which covered the greater part of the enclosed area. It was not a fort but it was a very formidable work and one to do credit to any engineer.

And here, armed with rifles and the hardly less deadly weapon at short range, the bow and flint-headed arrow, the Creeks waited for Jackson's appearance, for they had heard that he was about to make a clean sweep of the Creek Indian, not only to defeat the aim of the British, but to forever subdue the savages of the Southwest and open up the country for safe settlement by Americans. If Britain was not to directly suffer from this campaign her allies were, for they were to be wiped out or rendered harmless. Such was Jackson's plan.

And so the fortified savages lurked and

waited, sending out their spies to watch the movements of the coming whites and evidently receiving much satisfaction at hearing of the difficulties that beset the advancing army.

And the difficulties were many. Jackson was eleven days going from Fort Strother to the Horseshoe, for it was no little work to cut roads and bridge streams so that his supplies could follow; he did not purpose going through another starvation experience, and that, too, in the face of a desperate enemy so sure of victory that they looked for no further line of retreat than was afforded by the lovely river running on their flanks and rear.

It may well be supposed that the general was cautious. He heard with lively satisfaction that the bulk of his foe had cooped themselves on one spot. From his friendly Indian runners and spies he heard of the great strength of the log wall which stretched clear across the neck of land, and probably sighed for the men who were to face it when

told that it was pierced with two sets of loopholes and so arranged that the troops must receive the enemy's fire on the flanks as well as on the front. He looked to his two little field-pieces to batter down this wall, but, as will be seen, he looked in vain. The best piece of news he received was that the Creeks had failed to make any provision to defend the bank over the river in the rear of their position. It was true that the foot of the bluff was lined with canoes into which the Indians might escape if driven from their stronghold, but no line of retreat had been protected, and, indeed, the Creeks thought not of retreat; to them victory was already theirs and their belts were already heavy with the prospective scalps of American soldiers.

Neither did the Americans dream of being defeated, and for their confidence they had better reasons than the red man. First, deducting the several bodies of men detailed to hold open the road he had made, Jackson had a force of two thousand against the one

thousand fighting savages hemmed in by their own work. Two to one are heavy odds, and the general saw that the Indians had constructed their own slaughter-pen. His army was made up of two sorts of soldiers: one, the tried veterans who had stuck to him through all discouragements; the other, new men of the best Tennessee families, who were woodsmen by instinct (as nearly every man was in those days), and who had not been reduced by starvation or demoralized by forced and tedious inactivity. Moreover, supplies were plentiful, each man having close at hand full rations for twenty days, and to cap these advantages were the two cannon. These were no great arm in themselves, they being but three and six pounders, but nothing was so demoralizing to a savage as cannon, the noise of the report appalling him and the crash of a cannon shot of more avail than the ball itself.

With this little army were men who, as yet obscure, were destined to become famous. Davy Crockett, the future hero of the Alamo,

Retired before end of campaign.
See DAB

was there, a rollicking, daredevil youth, who a few years later was to be the last man to fall in the Alamo massacre at San Antonio, when Texas was fighting for her independence from Mexico. Here also was Sam Houston, who, next to Jackson himself, became the most talked of man in the country. He, too, gained his fame in Texas by defeating Santa Anna, the prime mover in the Alamo outrage. But to-day Houston is only an ensign in his regiment—a strapping young man clad like an Indian, a man to whom fear was a word the meaning of which he knew nothing.

When Jackson reached the famous Tallapoosa bend he halted and took a survey of the defenses. His quick, military eye easily determined the weak spot in the plan of the savages, and calling up his old friend, General Coffee, who commanded all the mounted men and a tribe of friendly Indians, he sent him down the river with his force, ordering him to ford the stream two miles below, and creep up the opposite bank until abreast of

the toe of the Horseshoe. He was to let his arrival be known through a messenger.

While Coffee was on his way as directed, Jackson hauled his artillery to a point of vantage near the wall, and then quietly waited.

It was late in March. The live-oaks were green, the flowers were blooming, the sun was warm and pleasant, and there was little about the land to remind one of the bleak early spring of the North. Birds chirped and flew about, ignorant of the convulsion that was soon to jar the silent air. Not a sound was heard. Outside in the forest lay two thousand men ready to leap up at the word of command, inside were concealed one thousand savages thirsting for blood and scalps, the horrid war-whoop on the tip of every tongue. Every gun was cocked, a finger trembled on every trigger, and many a notched arrow lay at rest ready to be shot from the tightened bow.

Presently came the word that Coffee had reached his position unobserved, and at once

Jackson ordered the bombardment to begin. Then upon the air there broke the thunder of the two cannon, and the affrighted birds wheeled in their flight and plunged into the depths of the forest.

The first ball buried itself in the soft palmetto logs, as did the second and third ; so did all of them, in fact, and the savages behind the strong barricade whooped in mingled delight and derision. There was no sign of a breach—nor a sign that one would be made—and both officers and men besought the general to order an assault. But this Jackson hesitated to do, not wishing to sacrifice the lives necessary to such an undertaking ; however, he stationed his riflemen in trees at close range, and many a savage behind the wall fell under their skilful fire. Thus the general waited for an auspicious moment to send a mass of troops against the enemy.

CHAPTER IX

THE END OF THE CREEKS

And the moment soon came. Coffee from the safe haven of the opposite bank heard the thunder of the guns and chafed at his inactivity, probably thinking there was but little glory in cutting off the escape of a beaten enemy, should it come to that, while his companions in arms were risking their lives. He knew by the sound of derisive shouting and the dropping fire of rifles that not much was being accomplished in front, and soon resolved to take an active hand in the battle on his own account.

First he ordered the best swimmers among his Indian allies to cross the river and cut away and bring back all the canoes that swung at the foot of the bluff; he could see that the enemy, not having a suspicion of a force in their rear, had left their fleet un-

guarded. Coffee's act was for a twofold purpose, one of which was to keep the Creeks from escaping if they were beaten. The move was perfectly successful, not a man or canoe being lost, and he was now ready to become more aggressive. He ordered Colonel Morgan and his famous riflemen to take the stolen canoes, cross over, set fire to the Indian village, and attack the foe at the breastworks in the rear. This, too, was successful, and soon, by the smoke rising from the burning huts as well as by the distant shots Jackson saw that a timely diversion had been effected, and, as it quickly became apparent that Morgan was being driven back by force of numbers, he ordered a general assault on the wall.

The order was received with a shout, and the men, leaping up, pressed forward. Many fell under the terrible fire that met them, but the rest forced their way up to the very loopholes, and thrusting in their rifles, played havoc with the defenders. But the whites paid dearly for their bravery. The Creeks

rallied to the wall and cut them down with a return fire ; indeed, so sharp was the contest that two rifles were often thrust through the same loophole but in opposite directions and both contestants fell dead under a simultaneous explosion. It soon became plain that the wall could only be carried by climbing its height ; and again the men swept forward.

Curses, shouts, and the blood-curdling war-whoop now filled the air. Rifles cracked, balls whistled, and the deadly bowstring twanged its sharp note of death. Running men fell, and the living tripped over them, but onward went the assaulters, this time to top the wall or die at the foot of it. Major Montgomery, of the Thirty-ninth Regiment, was the first man to reach the crest of the defense, but at once fell dead with a ball through his brain. The second man was Ensign Houston, who received a barbed arrow in his thigh before he had fairly gained the top, but he was soon joined by a host of others and the ramparts were cleared, the savages falling back to the cover and the

forest and fighting for each foot of ground with a stubbornness that was wonderful. But stubbornness only delayed the fatal moment, and, as had been foreseen by Jackson, the battle became a slaughter, for the Indians, fearing torture if captured, asked for no quarter and gave none. A wounded Indian was nearly as dangerous as one unhurt. To approach him with a humane desire to relieve his thirst or sufferings was to meet with death, if the means of causing death were at his hand. A wounded white might have appealed to a rattlesnake about to strike with as fair an expectancy of having mercy shown him. Down came the merciless tomahawk, and off came the reeking scalp ere there was time for a prayer. Thus the cry soon became "No prisoners, no mercy." It was a battle in which the result for each side was to be victory or death.

This condition of things was due to the Indian prophets, who, by means of fantastic dress and more fantastic rites, had made the great bulk of the savages believe that they.

the prophets, had been gifted by the Great Spirit above all men. They averred that a surrounding magic defended them from the bullet of the white man, and foretold a great victory over the invaders. They assured the warriors that for a brave to die fighting was a warrant for everlasting happiness; he would be at once ushered into the "happy hunting-ground," where would be found his squaw, his wigwam, his gun, and bliss evermore. To be taken prisoner was to be slowly tortured by the whites, and in this case death would not open an immediate Elysium.

And the simple children of the forest believed these things and pinned their faith on the words of the undoubted tricksters. No wonder the savages fought like fiends. A white scalp was a passport to glory on earth; death, to a glory greater by far.

And so they struggled. From tree to tree they flitted like dusky ghosts. From behind each trunk a bullet flew, each bush sent out a spurt of flame, but backward rolled the war-whoop as backward under the pres-

sure of the trained soldiers the diminishing Indians were forced, and when finally the defeated savages broke for the river they came face to face with the fact that their village was in flames, their canoes gone, and the way of escape closed. Men, women, and children were massed in terrible confusion, but ever the white man's rifle-bullet fell among them and mere defeat became maddening desperation.

But there was no surrender. Scores of Indians plunged into the current, essaying to swim across, but they were met by a storm of shot from the other side, and their lifeless carcasses turned over and sank, or floated down the stream. How many died this way no mortal knows, but two hundred was considered a modest computation; a tufted head became a mark for many rifles, and few, if any, found safety by swimming.

At last a number of the defeated savages took refuge in a thick clump of tangled *débris* and fallen timber at a point on the river's bank, and for hours foiled all attempts

Scores of Indians plunged into the current.

to remove them. They were perfectly sheltered, and though they might finally be starved out, Jackson had no time for siege tactics. The gallant Houston, who had torn the barbed arrow from his thigh and roughly bound up the wound, attempted to lead a few volunteers into this stronghold, but at the first discharge of shots by the hidden foe he fell with two bullets in his shoulder, and was borne off totally disabled. The attack failed. The position could not be forced by assault without a terrible loss of life, and it was finally determined to burn the Indians from their lair. Fire was set to the mass of brush, and as it became too hot to hold them, the savages, one by one, took to the river only to meet the fate of their companions, being mercilessly shot as they appeared. One old chief, of all, escaped. With a head full of ready invention, and cool, withal, he forced the pith from a reed, and lying under water close to the shore, breathed through the hollow stem until dark and then swam the stream in safety.

A terrible night followed this terrible day. Lurking savages, hidden beneath piles of slain, lay in wait for an opportunity to escape, or, failing in this, to send one more soldier to a sudden and unexpected death. Numbers of them were unearthed by parties detailed to gather and bury the dead, and even at this hopeless pass the discovered savage would not surrender, but had to be shot. In the morning great numbers were found hidden in nooks and corners or shamming death in the open ; refusing to submit, they, too, were shot, and so helped to fill the long list of the slain. Five hundred and fifty-seven Indians were found dead on the peninsula, which had been a veritable trap for them, and with those killed while attempting to cross the stream, over seven hundred of the one thousand had been sent to their long home. Among the dead were found three prophets dressed in their outlandish rig, stricken down by the bullets they had declared harmless. Jackson's loss, though severe, was as nothing in comparison

to that of the Creeks. Fifty-five of the troops were killed outright and one hundred and forty-six were wounded more or less severely. The dead soldiers were sunk in the deepest part of the river so that no returning savage could get at their scalps, and with his wounded men on hastily constructed litters, Jackson, instead of stopping to rest, began a retrograde movement toward his source of supplies, with the intention of at once pushing his force into what the savages called their "holy ground," a section of the country on which, they said, no white man could walk and live.

But the white man did walk there, nor did he die from the effect. By the time our fiery general had reached the so-called sacred land, the war was over; the savages dispersed before he caught sight of them. Their spirit was broken, their nation crushed. Since the war began fully one-half of their fighting force had been killed, the rest were scattered, and, like most hunted men, ready to make terms at any cost. Some few of the refugees

made their way to Florida, where they afterward created trouble, but were finally beaten by the same general. Jackson, or "old Jack," became a terrible name to the Indians; it was of as much potency as a battery of artillery. With Jackson as leader, a fight against the whites was looked upon as hopeless.

Soon the beaten chiefs began to come in, hoping to make their peace with the great general, but the great general now looked at the fawning savages with a scowl and sternly ordered them to the North, where they would be dealt with according to their deserts. Thus the great Southwest was cleared, and cleared forever, of hostile Indians. Settlers soon poured in, and the dark forests fell under their bright axes; the sun shone on land that for centuries had never known its smile, and Nature's frown left her face; Jackson had kept his word.

The Southwest was not only clear, but was secure. One could now travel from Nashville overland to New Orleans and never hear a war-whoop or fear an ambush.

Previous to this one could only reach the coast in safety by means of the great rivers, and this was a long and devious route.

CHAPTER X

FORT BOWYER

It is probable that the reader pictures Jackson as, with recovered health, lending his new vigor to the troops and urging them on with drawn sword, flashing eye, and ringing voice. But there was nothing of that kind. Jackson's general health seemed permanently broken. Even during his most strenuous moments he was a physical wreck, and looked it—looked it so completely that strangers seeing him for the first time were aghast. It was difficult for them to couple such energy of mind and action with his almost tottering skeleton. Only on horseback did he partly hide his infirmities and appear like a man. He had not recovered from the wounds given by Jesse Benton; he never did wholly recover from them. Every movement was guarded, though sometimes, in the

excitement of heated action, he so far forgot himself as to make a free gesture or violent motion, and the resultant pain so sickened him that he would almost faint and fall from his horse. He was miserably weak, pitifully thin, and so yellow from the malaria of the swamp-infested districts through which he had moved that his face looked like parchment. Moreover, he was afflicted with an intestinal trouble that had become chronic, and which, in its sharper attacks, made him as thoroughly helpless as a newly born infant. In these paroxysms the pain was exquisite, and even to him unbearable. His only medicine was weak gin and water, and when within the active grip of this malady his only relief was in sitting astride a chair and letting his arms dangle over its back. Somehow this eased him after a time. When, on a march through the forest, he was suddenly stricken, and no chair was within an hundred miles, he had a growing sapling bent to the ground, and throwing his arms over this, he hung for hours, groaning

in agony until the attack passed. Added to this list of infirmities there was one which he might have controlled. He was an inveterate user of tobacco, smoking with the utmost regularity the long pipes of which he always kept a supply on hand, and chewing to excess. The result of this overindulged habit was to permanently impair his digestion and occasion such terrible headaches as to prostrate him. It is not recorded that he fought against this miserable appetite, but if he did he failed to conquer it; he smoked and chewed till the last.

But his pains, his weakness, his bodily disabilities, never for an instant affected his purposes. How many men would have pressed forward into a hostile and well-nigh unknown country under these circumstances? Andrew Jackson's body never accomplished much; it did not rule him entirely, as some men's bodies rule them; but his brain, his spirit, and what is termed his "clear grit," were factors which influenced not only his physique but directed the minds and bodies

of most of his fellows. His mind did not cure him of his ills, but it kept his ills from killing him. In this spirit of determination lay the secret of both his success in life and the length of his miserable days.

After the battle of Tahopeka his popularity in the Southwest was assured and placed upon a solid foundation; but so remote from each other were the different sections of our vast country that the hero of the Creek War was barely known in the more thickly populated portions. Men in the North heard of Jackson's victories as mere news notices, but at last they began to inquire who he was. But little was known of the lawyer-soldier outside of his own district, and events and names of the South penetrated far New England with the weakness of a faint echo. As one traveled from the North to the South the sound grew until at last the name and fame of Jackson dominated all others. In his home neighborhood it was almost an insult to the community to push inquiries about the famous son of that

section; it argued indifference, or, what was worse, inexcusable ignorance.

But the authorities at Washington had kept him in touch, and could not ignore him without ignoring the people with whom he was a hero; and when, shortly after the Creek campaign, there came a vacancy in the list of major-generals of the United States army, the position was offered to him, and it was at once accepted.

This new rank increased Jackson's income at a time when he greatly needed more money. His pay was a princely sum for those days, averaging him about six thousand dollars yearly, and never was cash more thoroughly earned.

But the office permitted of no ease. It is true that the war was over so far as the Creeks were concerned, but England, not discouraged by the defeat of her red allies, was becoming more aggressive toward the South, and now openly threatened the coast. It was evident that Mobile was to be the point of attack, and to Mobile hurried the

promoted general. The questions of ill-health and needed rest were not considered; his duty was plain, and he hastened to do it —we will see with what results.

At this time (1814) Florida was in the hands of the Spanish, to whom it belonged. According to our treaty with the King of Spain, that power was neutral and was supposed to take no part in the war between America and England; but in defiance of all treaties it did take part, if not actively, in such a way as to help the English. Florida opened her principal port, Pensacola, to the English fleet, and there the English forces made their headquarters, riding their ships in safety on the broad bay and keeping their troops in the fort that protected it. It was a base for supplies that was very necessary to them, as they had none other nearer than the West Indies.

Colonel Nichols, who had command of the British troops, made little attempt to conceal the fact that he was about to move against Mobile, and Jackson, through his

spies, well knew of the contemplated attack. He protested against Spain's breach of international law, and resolved that when the time came he would take matters into his own hands—just then all his energy was directed toward the defense of the threatened point.

As a city, town, or even village, Mobile amounted to nothing in those days, and its capture would have been of little advantage to the British; but Mobile Bay, with its great system of rivers, was a desirable possession, and the town itself, containing about one hundred buildings and a few dilapidated blockhouses, which could be turned into points of defense, would furnish shelter for troops and be a convenient base from which to operate against the surrounding country. If the British could once obtain a foothold in the bay the town must fall, and from the town it would be difficult to dislodge them.

Thirty miles from Mobile village was Mobile Point, a sandy hook of land that protected the bay from the surges racing in

from the great Gulf of Mexico. On this point the United States Government had started to erect a fort which was to command the only channel by which ships could enter the inland waters, but the defense was in an unfinished state; it had been abandoned for some years and was now falling into ruins. This work was called Fort Bowyer, but has since been renamed Fort Morgan. Save for two twenty-four-pound cannon, six twelve-pound, and a dozen smaller pieces, all exposed to the elements and unmounted, there was little about the fortification that gave it value as a defensive post. To be sure, there were cannon-balls, piled up and red with old rust, but there was no powder to back them, nor was there even a bomb-proof to protect the men. But for the hillocks of white sand in its rear —hillocks some of them so high that a gun placed upon them could have commanded the interior of the fort—the place was surrounded by the deep-blue sea; the hot sun shone from a dazzling sky, and the only green near by was that of the coarse, thin grass

clinging to the sand-hills and bending like wires under the fresh gulf breeze. It was all blue and white, silent and desolate.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE

To this point went Jackson in the latter part of August, 1814. He saw that here lay the key to the whole situation and wondered why the British, when they passed on their way to Pensacola, had not repaired the fort and left a few scores of men to hold it. It would have upset all his plans and probably rendered others useless. Mobile would have been lost.

But now it was too late; Jackson had his hand on it. He placed in it 160 men, as, until his promised reenforcements should arrive, he could spare no more. To command them he left Major Lawrence, a brave and competent officer of the regular army, and after supplying the force with some ammunition and provisions and promising more, he returned to Mobile to hurry the

work on the immediate defenses of the town. Though his body could be in but one place at a time, his mind, spirit, and commands were everywhere. He seemed to see things beyond the sight of others, and from his headquarters viewed the situation with the eye of a military genius.

Meanwhile Major Lawrence went to work to make the fort serve something of its original purpose, and the men hustled about to prepare for the enemy, who might heave in sight at any hour. For twelve days they worked unmolested and with effect, and when on September 12th a lookout came running in to say that the British ships were coming, though all was not completed, enough had been done to enable the little garrison to hope they could make it very warm for their visitors.

But the work went on even while the British Colonel Nichols landed on the beach a mile or so back of the fort, with 130 British marines and over a hundred Indians; it went on as the British ships anchored off the

coast and well out of cannon-shot. These latter were four men-of-war: the Hermes, with twenty-two guns; the Sophia, eighteen guns; the Carron, twenty guns; and the Childers, with eighteen guns. The whole was under command of one Captain Percy, who also commanded the Hermes.

An easy thing it must have seemed to him to capture the small and unfinished fort. His great ships lay ready at his command, and on the land behind the feeble-looking work were nearly twice the number of men the fort contained; painted Indians, with the war-whoop anxious to leap from their red throats, sturdy marines who looked at the matter as holiday work. The only thing which showed that the way was not open was the little square of bunting on which were the Stars and Bars—stars which Percy could not dim—bars that were to prove too strong for him to break, although his men were five to Lawrence's one.

Did the last-named officer shrink at the prospect? Not a bit. He called his force

together and made the watchword, "Don't give up the fort." They agreed, every man under oath, not to surrender to even an overwhelming force unless they could obtain honorable terms and full protection from the Indians, and with this heroic spirit animating them the men returned to their guns, which had never yet been fired. It is strange, in the face of the result of this battle, that not a man among those detailed to work the artillery had ever handled a large gun; they were to learn their lesson while fighting, and they learned it well.

Jackson, thirty miles away, knew nothing of the state of things obtaining on the coast until Lawrence sent him a hurried message. In response to this the general forwarded eighty more men—the last he dared spare—and with a spirited reply to the fort's commander left him to defend the point without hope of further help.

It was an anxious time for the little band by the sea. Each wave that rolled in on the white beach seemed to bear a threat from

the off-lying fleet; the soft air whispered danger from another quarter. For a time no move was made, and the Americans still worked and waited. The guns had been mounted, the bomb-proofs finished, but there were yet many weak points to strengthen.

Presently Captain Woodbine, of the British on the land, brought up a howitzer, his only one, and planting it on a high sand-dune about three-quarters of a mile from the fort, fired a shot at the Americans, but the ball did no damage. In reply, Lawrence turned two guns on the spot and the enemy scattered at the first fire; then again came a long wait.

Down went the hot sun, but the little garrison, ever vigilant, slept on its arms, each man at his post of duty. The brilliant Southern night brought no change, neither was there as much as an alarm. The day dawned and the scene was unaltered; there lay the ships, four black threats, and there, well out of range and for the most part out of sight, lay the marines and Indians. As

the day wore on, a number of boats, mere specks on the blue water, passed between the shore and the ships, but nothing seemed to come of it; later in the day a few boats approached and began sounding the channel, but two or three charges of grape-shot from the fort were sent spattering about them, and they withdrew in a hurry. Again there came a blank in events—a wait which strained the nerves of the silent defenders and set their commander wondering what would happen next.

Down sank the red sun again, and again came a hot, still night. The sentinels, keenly alive to every sound, heard nothing but the dull thunder of the combers on the beach and the hiss of the receding foam. The following morning was thick with early mists and many an eye in the fort tried to pierce the fleecy curtain. When, finally, the heat and brisk wind dissipated the fog there still lay the fleet unmoved, and there, too, was the camp of the landed enemy. Were the British trying to tire the fort's defenders? For

a time it seemed so, but in the course of the morning there was much moving of boats between ships and shore, and at last it became clear that something was about to take place.

And something did take place, surprising the inmates of the fort as much as though the ships had crawled upon land. The brisk wind had fallen to a light breathing from the south, and soon after the boats ceased passing to and fro; then every vessel spread its canvas and fled to sea, beating its way down the gulf.

Had they gone? Had they given over their first intention without a fight? Had the little, starry flag frightened them away? One might have thought so but for the fact that Woodbine and his force remained behind in a little sand fortification they had thrown up. Every eye hung on the receding fleet; smaller and smaller it became, lower and lower sank the black hulls until the blue line of the horizon was over them. Then there was a change. It was about two in the afternoon when the anxious watchers

saw the hulls reappear and grow nearer, and at last conviction came. The ships had gone out to form; they were now sailing down the wind in line of battle; they were about to attack the fort.

At the head of the line came the Hermes and the larger guns of the fort engaged her at long range. She replied with spirit, but no damage was done. On she came, proudly and bravely, right up the narrow channel which ran under the guns of the fort, and when she had approached to within less than easy musket-shot, she dropped her anchors, swung around and let go a whole broadside, the crash of which received a prompt answer in the shape of a shower of round shot from the fort. The other vessels followed the lead of the Hermes, and though they were not quite so near the fort as the flagship, they were well within range.

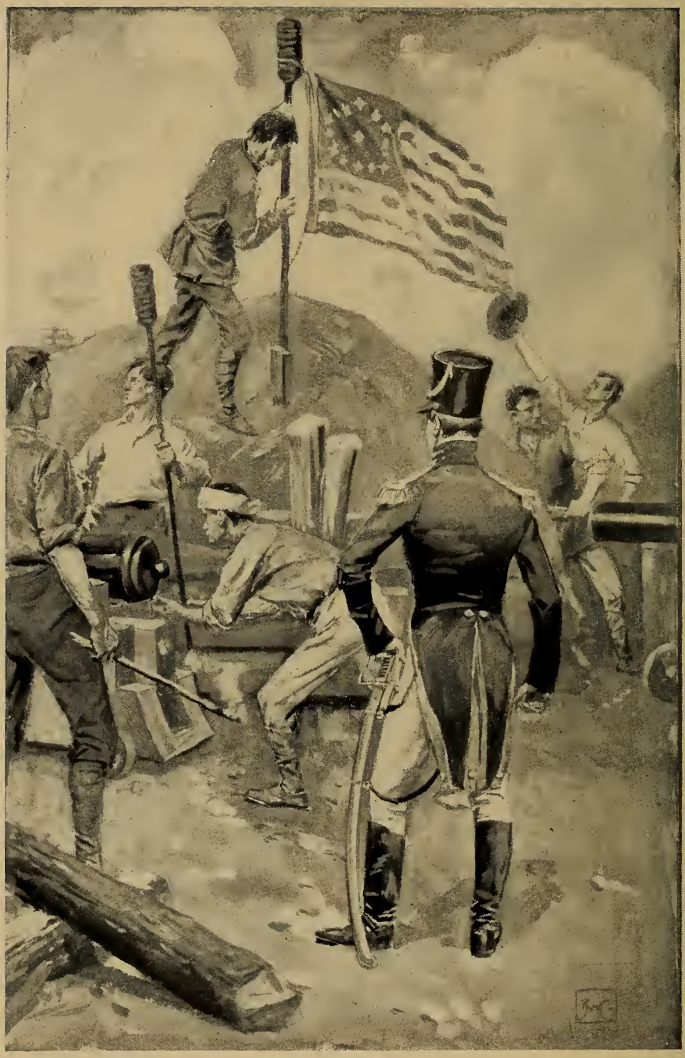
The thunder of cannon now rolled as it had never before rolled over Mobile Point, nor was it to roll again until the gallant Farragut passed that way nearly twoscore years

after. When the fight was well on Captain Woodbine thought his chance had come, and again brought up his howitzer, but a few shots from the fort silenced him as quickly as before; his Indians did not relish cannon. As the men fought and became more familiar with working the great guns their shots became better and better. They were not demoralized, for as yet, with all the iron hail hurled against them, not a man had been killed. Let us quote from Parton again:

"For an hour the firing continued on both sides without a moment's pause, the fleet and the fort enveloped in huge volumes of smoke lighted up by the incessant flash of the guns. At half past five the halliards of the Hermes's flag was severed by a shot and the flag fell into the fire and smoke below. Major Lawrence, thinking it possible that the ship might have surrendered, ceased his fire. A silence of five minutes succeeded, at the expiration of which a new flag fluttered up the masthead of the commodore's ship, and the Sophia, that lay next her, renewed

the strife by firing a whole broadside at once. In the interval every gun in the fort had been loaded, and the broadside was returned with a salvo that shook the earth. A most furious firing succeeded and continued for some time longer without any important mishap occurring on either side."

But the shot that cut the flag-line on the Hermes was not the only lucky one that went hurtling across the water from the fort. A better one was to come. In the hottest part of the action a ball cut the stern cable of the Hermes, and the tide, catching her, swung her around bow on to the fort in such a position that not a single gun could bear. Lawrence saw his chance and directed his full fire at the helpless vessel. For nearly half an hour she lay thus exposed to a furious raking cannonade. Her deck was soon swept clear of every man and she could neither be worked nor fought. In this condition, as inert as a log of wood, she slowly drifted along until she grounded in shallow water, and her commander, seeing her help-



A new flag was planted on the ramparts.

less position and not wishing to surrender her, set her afire after transferring his wounded to the Sophia.

During all this time the other ships were sending their iron rain at the fort. Finally a chance shot cut down the flagstaff, and as it fell, Woodbine, with his Indians, came charging up, thinking that Lawrence had surrendered. But their eyes were at once opened to the mistake, for they were received by a galling burst of grape-shot that sent the Indians howling away to the protection of the sand-dunes, and the rest beat a quick retreat. In a minute more a new flag was nailed to a sponging-rod and planted on the ramparts. The Stars and Bars again floated, nor had they been hauled down.

As soon as the crew of the Hermes had gained the deck of the Sophia, that vessel, which had been severely handled and consequently crippled, made haste to escape the fate of the flag-ship; but she had a hard time of it, though finally she got out of range. The remaining two of the fleet hav-

ing been at a greater distance from the spiteful little fort, were not seriously damaged, but seeing the action of the Sophia, they recognized the futility of trying to reduce their enemy, and therefore hoisted their sails and put to sea in hot haste.

Though the battle was won, and as a battle was over, the Americans kept up their fire on the Hermes until the flames Percy had kindled broke out and heralded the ship's speedy destruction. All that evening she burned, a magnificent sight, lighting up the sea for miles around; near midnight the fire reached her well-stored magazine and she blew up with a deafening detonation. It was a grand finale, and the black darkness that now fell on land and water bore no more terrors for the little garrison. Mobile Bay and Mobile town had been saved.

At dawn the next day the vicinity was clear of enemies. Nichols and Woodbine, with their marines and Indians, had gone, and in the offing were seen the three ships that bore them away. They came back no

more. Two of the marines stayed behind, however—deserters from the British service—and they told how severely their former friends had been handled. Their report was probably exaggerated, but the British afterward acknowledged a loss of thirty-two killed and forty wounded; the Americans lost four men by death, and six through wounds caused by the bursting of a cartridge. The fort was badly battered, however, though it had not been greatly weakened. Two of the biggest guns had been cracked in firing; two more had been knocked out of service, while one had burst and the muzzle of another had been broken off by a heavy ball from the ships. The exultant men counted some three hundred shot-holes in the fort's walls, and the land around looked as if it had been plowed. On the other hand, of all the guns the fort contained only twelve pieces had been in active use against the fleet, yet the record showed that they had thrown seven hundred balls.

What a weight of iron must have passed between ships and fort! what a wonder that such a small loss of life resulted! One of our modern guns could do more service or damage in a dozen well-placed shots than did all the armament on that memorable day off Mobile Point.

CHAPTER XII

PENSACOLA

Did Jackson now draw a long sigh of relief and rest? Not he. He was in a frenzy of anxiety. It was true that the enemy had gone—but where had he gone? New Orleans lay wide open to almost any force, and yet Jackson felt powerless. The promised reenforcements had not arrived, and to move his small force from Fort Bowyer was to risk losing the fruits of the late fight. For six long weeks Jackson waited, and hoped, and swore at the tardiness of officials, but in the interval he heard that Nichols had returned to Pensacola, and was preparing for active service elsewhere. What point could he be aiming at but the pride of the Southwest—the Crescent City—New Orleans?

At the end of six weeks new men began to come in, his friend Coffee at the head

of 2,800 fresh troops, with the rest, and by November 1st Jackson found himself at the head of 4,000 men and a few friendly Indians.

During his long wait his wrath against Pensacola and the Spanish governor there had waxed hotter and hotter, and when he found himself backed by a respectable army he knew well enough what his next move would be. He had communicated his plans to the Secretary of War in Washington, and in the rather blind answer from that official he found, or thought he found, permission to go ahead. In this correspondence about Pensacola there were sowed the seeds of no end of trouble, which, in after-years, bore bitter fruit for many men, but that has nothing to do with this story.

Jackson was about to move. As his men took little or no baggage and but eight days' rations, it was evident that the irascible general looked for a short campaign, and a short one it was. The weather there was not the bleak November weather of the North, but

was warm and pleasant, and as the troops were in high spirits and in full sympathy with their errand, that of routing the British from Pensacola, they marched rapidly on, and by the sixth of the month the army had arrived within a mile and a half of the town. They wasted no time here, though they halted by the roadside long enough for one of the officers, Major Pierce, to take a message from Jackson demanding the surrender of all the fortifications and munitions of war. The general promised to hold them in trust, give a receipt for them, and expressly stated that nothing was to be destroyed; he was not making war on Spain, but upon the English who were under Spanish protection. This message was sent to the governor with the assurance that the inhabitants of the town, their religion, and the town itself would remain unmolested if his demands were complied with, but the English should go; he had come to drive them out, and drive them out he would.

At this high-handed demand the fright-

ened governor knew not how to act. With the British on one side and a threatening force on the other he was in a pitiable state; but the fear of the British prevailed, and he hesitatingly refused to comply with Jackson's demand.

When the envoy returned to the general and communicated the answer it was night. The old veteran was not excited as he listened to the report; he neither raved nor swore, but his thin lips came together in a fine line, and rising to his feet he simply said:

"Turn out the troops!"

It was before daylight on November 7th that the soldiers formed and marched upon the road by the side of which they had bivouacked. The country about was open and level, and the growing light exposed them to the enemy as they approached. For a mile or more they marched openly, and as they came within range they were fired upon by a battery of two guns, while a shower of musket-balls came from behind

the shelter of houses and garden-walls. But on went the troops with a firmness that commanded the admiration of Jackson himself. In a letter to Governor Blout he said of them:

"My pride was never more heightened than in viewing the uniform firmness of my troops, and with what undaunted courage they advanced, with a strong fort ready to assail them on the right, seven armed vessels on the left, strong blockhouses and batteries of cannon in their front; but they still advanced with unbroken firmness and entered the town."

The battery that had opened fire was soon carried, and the musketry from the gardens ceased as it was returned with effect. On went the soldiers and down went a second battery before it had time to load but twice. It was evident that the blood of "Old Hickory" was up, and that the town would suffer for its reception of him, but at this point the totally demoralized governor came running from his house wildly waving a white hand-

kerchief as a flag of truce. He now promised that if the town was spared he would surrender it and all its forts and defenses, and with this understanding Jackson ordered a cessation of hostilities. But whether by what the general called "Spanish treachery" or through a misunderstanding of orders, *all* the forts were not surrendered at once. One after another hauled down their flags; all but the most important one of the whole—Fort Barrancas—in which were a large number of English, and which, if in possession of the Americans, would have held the English ships as in a trap. It was six miles from the town, and commanded the bay with its guns.

Jackson wished this work, and it was promised him, but the delay of the governor in giving his orders—a delay perhaps unavoidable, perhaps intentional—enabled the English to escape. That night, when the general had fully made up his mind to storm the fortification the next morning, there were heard three explosions, and the report soon

came that Fort Barrancas had been blown to ruins by the English, who had retreated to their ships and sailed away for an unknown destination.

Here was victory for Jackson, but his satisfaction was tinctured with great bitterness. He had routed out the British and ruined their rendezvous ; but where had they gone? Was Mobile to be threatened again, and the troops away? was the battered fort, with its reduced garrison, to fight again and against a larger fleet than before? These questions nearly crazed the general. He hurriedly sent word to Lawrence, who still commanded the fort, to be on his guard, and then he prepared to quit Pensacola; the place was useless to him without Fort Barrancas.

There was no delay permitted. By the next morning the Americans in full force were on their hurried way back to Mobile; there had not been a single man killed during the fight and there were less than twenty wounded.

And at Mobile they found peace profound to stagnation. Nothing had happened nor had Lawrence seen a sign of the threatening fleet. Later came the information that the English had gone to Appalachicola and were fortifying the place as though in fear of attack. And well might they have been afraid, now knowing the methods of the American general. The American general, however, did not think them worth his personal attention, so sent one of his officers, a Major Blue, who with some troops and a tribe of friendly Indians made short work of them. The hostile Indians hired by the English were completely defeated and scattered, and the English themselves were forced to get to sea again. There seemed to be no spot on Spanish or American soil on which Nichols could rest his weary feet.

But Jackson well knew that the end was not yet. There was one point on which he always kept his eye, fearing for it. Mobile was not the most important town on the coast; there was another on which he knew

the English wish was fastened, and believing they were preparing to strike New Orleans, he left General Winchester in charge of Mobile, and bidding General Coffee to follow him at a rate that would not tire the troops, he himself departed for the Crescent City. It was a very rough journey for a sick man. One hundred and seventy miles over roads rarely better and sometimes worse than a wood path or a half-drained ditch was an undertaking which would have appalled most men, but Jackson made the trip, and save for his staff of officers he was alone.

He averaged seventeen miles a day and arrived at New Orleans on the first day of December, 1814. Negotiations to end the war between England and America were then pending—were about completed—but Jackson did not know it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BRITISH LAND

THE prematurely aged man was in a state bordering on collapse when he entered the city. He was thoroughly exhausted and had to be helped from his horse, but instead of taking to his bed for needed rest he plunged at once into the business that had brought him there.

New Orleans lay wide open to the enemy, and had they come at this time scarcely a show of opposition would have met them. It is true that there were some half-filled regiments, beautifully drilled but poorly equipped; it is true that the best blood of the city was within their ranks and that they lacked nothing in valor and ability; but up to General Jackson's arrival there had been no head to lead them, or rather, there had been a dozen heads pulling in

different directions. Governor Claiborne, alive to the condition of matters and full of fear for the future, had convened an extra session of the Legislature, hoping that some way to meet the growing danger would be revealed, but the Legislature contented itself with appointing a few weak committees with illy defined powers, and then the members fell to quarreling among themselves. It was evident that but few looked upon the danger as real, and yet, while the people were dreaming of security but taking no means to obtain it, a British fleet of fifty ships carrying a thousand guns, twenty thousand soldiers, and ten thousand sailors had left Negril Bay, on the shore of the island of Jamaica, West Indies, and the entire force was bearing down upon the undefended city.

But, as in the case of Mobile Bay, Jackson arrived first, and, waving the magic wand of his intense personality, threw a new atmosphere over the community. All was changed; order came out of confusion, and the many divergent interests, centered in the

mighty intellect of this one sick man, moved smoothly toward a single end. It was he, and he alone, who expressed entire confidence in his ability to defend New Orleans, and that, too, at a time when he had less than a thousand muskets to back him. This confidence inspired confidence, and the thinking men of the town who had previously deplored the laxity of the authorities and quailed at the prospects held for the future, now smiled, shook hands with each other on the streets, and blessed Jackson as the man of destiny.

The general, often tottering from weakness, rode here, there, and everywhere delivering his orders instead of opinions. He first placed the city under martial law, then he set certain men to doing certain things, and they were done. Every wire that moved the mass ended in his hands. After inspecting the country about the town he determined the weak points and the strong points and set about strengthening the former—the latter, he saw, might care for themselves.

The city of New Orleans is but a few feet above the level of the sea and is itself built on quaking soil. All about, save on the river-side, are marshes and lagoons interspersed, along the river's bank, with great sugar-cane fields and fruit orchards where the apple and golden orange ripen side by side. The front door of the city opens upon the Mississippi River, here a mighty stream nearly a mile wide, hundreds of feet deep, and moving with majestic force at a rate of more than four miles an hour.

This powerful current was a protection to the city from the river-side; none of the unwieldy ships of war of that day could stem such a tide with an average wind, and should a favorable wind blow and waft them up the river they would be at the mercy of the stream when it became calm.

But as if the feat of sailing up the river was possible, it was further protected by a fort—Fort St. Philip, about half-way between the city and the gulf, and on the broad bosom of the flood lay two vessels

of war—the ship Louisiana and the little schooner Carolina, both unmanned, but each was to play an important part in the fight that was to come.

Jackson saw that the mighty strength of the giant stream was sufficient protection on one side, but on the other, giving easy access to the city's back door, lay Lakes Ponchartrain and Borgne, connected by a narrow strait and accessible from the sea by light-draft vessels. Should the enemy obtain possession of these sheets of water they could come close to their prey, and thus it became necessary to put up a gate to stop them. This gate was a small fort on the strait connecting the lakes, and to further strengthen it a fleet of six sailing vessels with twenty-three guns and nearly two hundred men under command of Lieutenant Thomas Jones was stationed on Lake Borgne. Lieutenant Jones was to at once notify Jackson of the approach of the enemy in that direction, and then to fight to the last extremity.

But of course it was not to be expected

that six little gunboats and a few score of men could withstand the powerful force coming against them. The great ships of the British counted for nothing but as so many bases of supply and a means of carrying an army, but there were plenty of small boats and plenty of men to fill them, and against these Jackson had his army.

At least he counted on having one. General Coffee was on his way; he was bringing about four thousand men, the army of Pensacola, but now nearly a tenth of them were sick. In Tennessee there was being raised a volunteer force under General Carroll, but not one in ten had a firearm of any kind, though they were supplied later. From Kentucky two thousand men were coming a roundabout way of fifteen hundred miles—men only, unprovided with any of the necessities for making war, but filled with the spirit that makes heroes. So meager were their supplies that it is recorded of these Kentuckians that they had but one cooking kettle to *each eighty men*, and yet they

marched with their heads high, and in the end fought like devils. In all, Jackson expected to have—and finally did have—between six and seven thousand men, though many went to supply the garrison of Fort St. Philip and the fort on the strait, and as many more went to the lake fleet and the war-ships Louisiana and Carolina. This was the situation on December 14th, the only available force being but two thousand armed men.

The British were three weeks in coming, sailing pleasantly over a lovely sea (for they were in the tropics), joking about the easy victory they were to have, and vastly pleased at the coming humility of the Yankees. And why not? They were the veterans of the Peninsular War, flushed with victory after victory, and many of them had been trained under the eye of the "Iron Duke" Wellington. They thought the Yankees were to be as nothing against their mettle.

On the 22d of December they anchored off Lake Borgne. From the British ships

and over the low and level marshes could be seen the little fleet that was to oppose their farther approach, and the British commander at once determined to get rid of it, as no forward movement could be made until the gunboats were either captured or destroyed. Against Jones and his six little vessels he sent fifty large open boats filled with marines. As a dead calm prevailed at the time the American commander could not retreat to the protection of the guns of the fort, and after a brave but hopeless fight he was obliged to surrender. The way was now open for the enemy. New Orleans was eighty miles away, the road to it unobstructed save by the fort, which could be flanked if the British determined to attack by the back door. And the alarm had not been given.

Nor did the alarm reach the city save by the merest chance. The English captured every guard-boat and guard they came across, and only by the escape of one of their prisoners, a young major by the name of Gabriel

Vallerè, who was caught upon his father's plantation while doing picket duty, was a complete surprise averted. Judge Walker thus describes the scene that ensued on Major Vallerè's arrival with the news, for until that moment the general had no suspicion that the British ships were off the coast, that Jones had been defeated, and that the enemy, who had at last found the road they had been looking for, that along the river-bank, had advanced quickly and were at that hour bivouacked within eight miles of New Orleans.

"During all the exciting events of this campaign Jackson had hardly the strength to stand erect without support; his body was sustained alone by the spirit within. Ordinary men would have shrunk into feeble imbeciles or useless invalids under such a pressure. The disease contracted in the swamps of Alabama still clung to him. Reduced to a mere skeleton, unable to digest his food, and unrefreshed by sleep, his life seemed to be preserved by some miraculous agency. There

in the parlor of his headquarters in Royal Street, surrounded by his faithful and efficient aides, he worked day and night, organizing his forces, despatching orders, receiving reports, and making all the necessary arrangements for the defense of the city.

"Jackson was thus engaged at half past one o'clock on the twenty-third day of December, 1814, when his attention was drawn from certain documents he was carefully reading by the sound of horses galloping down the streets with more rapidity than comported with the order of a city under martial law. The sounds ceased at the door of his headquarters, and the sentinel on duty announced the arrival of three gentlemen who desired to see the general immediately, having important intelligence to communicate.

" 'Show them in,' ordered the general.

"The visitors proved to be Mr. Dussau de la Croix, Major Gabriel Vallerè, and Colonel de la Ronde. They were stained with mud, and nearly breathless with the rapidity of their ride.

"'What news do you bring, gentlemen?' eagerly asked the general.

"'Important! Highly important!' responded Mr. de la Croix. 'The British have arrived at Vallerè's plantation, nine miles below the city, and are there encamped. Here is Major Vallerè, who was captured by them, has escaped, and will now relate his story.'

"The major accordingly detailed in a perspicuous manner all the occurrences we have related, employing his mother-tongue, the French language, which De la Croix translated to the general. At the close of Major Vallerè's narrative the general exclaimed:

"'By the Eternal! They shall not sleep upon our soil!'"

"Then courteously inviting his visitors to refresh themselves, and sipping a glass of wine in compliment to them, he turned to his secretary and aides and remarked:

"'Gentlemen, the British are below; we must fight them to-night!'"

From his confidence, serenity, and the tone of his voice one might have thought that a long-looked-for moment had at length arrived and that the matter had fallen exactly in line with his hopes, expectations, and preparations. On the contrary, Jackson was not at all prepared to see the enemy anywhere, much less so near the city. The knowledge had come to him with the suddenness of a blow.

His force had greatly increased, however, which was fortunate, but his willingness or anxiety to fight was due more to his knowledge of human nature than to a wish to avenge the insult to the soil. A quick and unexpected attack would do much to demoralize the enemy and make them cautious, while a tardy meeting would give his own green troops a chance to think, and perhaps fear and tremble, at the same time allowing the British an opportunity to choose their ground and work with deliberation.

It is hardly to be thought that with his untrained force and in the open field Jack-

son hoped to defeat the veterans of England, but he gave his orders as though he expected to drive the foe back into the gulf from which he came. To the head of each command went an order to break camp and go to the front ; there they were to await the general's arrival. Among the rest, Commodore Patterson was sent for and requested to have his two vessels (which had recently been manned with green hands) ready to weigh anchor and go down the river at short notice.

It looked as though the thing had been mapped out and prearranged days before, but it had not. The orders, full of detail which is not here given, were not due to the meditation of days or even hours ; the plan was the work of minutes.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NIGHT ATTACK

After a space of incredible mental activity, the general sat down to his dinner as cool as a cucumber. The dinner was of boiled rice and nothing else, as that was all the food his stomach could tolerate. A very little of this sufficed him, and when he had finished he went to his office and lay on a lounge for a short nap. At three o'clock he was in the saddle going to the front. He was ahead of his troops, and in the lower part of the city he halted to see them come up and pass on their way. As each command arrived it was ordered to press on to the Rodriguez Canal, an old mill-race six miles below the town, which stretched across the firm ground between the river and the swamp-land to the east. At four o'clock, when he had seen the little schooner Caro-

lina drop down the river in pursuance of his orders, he put spurs to his horse and disappeared in the direction his troops had taken.

From this time on to the next morning no one living can say exactly what happened, and those historians (now long dead) who attempted to describe the fight differ so widely in detail, and even generalities, that the truth is impossible to determine. This much, however, is known:

First, that Jackson, true to his instincts as an Indian fighter, determined to corner his enemy. They lay near the great levee, or high bank of the river, their bivouac fires glinting across the level plain like so many stars. Recollect that this was during the short days of December. The crops, which had erstwhile decked the land and obstructed extended vision, were now harvested. The sugar-cane fields were all stubble and many of the trees were barren of leaf. Second, the view showed the British position, and the general saw that if he could get a force to

hold the enemy from direct retreat he might attack in front and drive the invaders into the mighty stream near which they lay. Third, that accordingly he sent for General Coffee and ordered him to take his riflemen, flank the enemy, and be prepared to attack when signaled. Fourth, that he ordered the Carolina to drop down the stream, anchor abreast of the British camp, and open fire with her single great gun and all her smaller ones. This was to be the signal for the general attack. Until the great metal throat bellowed its note of war not a sound was to come from the American army. Just then its presence was unsuspected. Jackson had acted with wisdom, despatch, and secrecy.

The two forces were then fairly matched in numbers. The British in front, under the command of General Keane, was but the vanguard of the army, which was too far away to readily support it; while with him Jackson had but few more than two thousand men, most of them unused to battle. On the Carolina and Louisiana not one man in five knew

anything about a ship and had to learn their duties in doing them.

Though silence was commanded in the American army, the command was hardly necessary. The troops were too full of an appreciation of their position to be very hilarious. Those who had food ate it if they were hungry, but there was little hunger displayed. The time was full of tension. Men spoke in whispers as they lay on the ground and watched the misty moon rise above the swamp. Many hoped it would be too dark to fight—but alas for their hopes!

The moon failed early, the clouds covering it and making the night murky enough, and to increase the gloom, there blew in the night fog from the broad river. It became impossible to see five feet ahead, and even then objects were but dimly outlined.

But the fight went on, if not the way planned, yet with great fierceness, and that shade which covered the field shuts out the truth of much of the night's doings.

The Carolina played her part and played

it well. She trained her guns on the spot where the British camp was supposed to be, and without a sign of a mark let slip a storm of iron. It is said that her first broadside, delivered at seven o'clock, laid low a hundred British, but in the face of their returns this could hardly be true. At all events, she opened the ball—and opened it too soon for Coffee, who was stumbling slowly along his marshy way, an hour behind the time for his proper arrival at his destination.

Little beyond the foregoing facts is sure. At the signal, or soon after, Jackson ordered forward the main army, and forward it went, blindly, but full of faith that to go forward was the proper thing to do, since Andrew Jackson commanded. Then the silence suddenly turned to shrieking. In short order American and British met and became mixed in the dark, and the battle turned into a rough-and-tumble fight. Both friend and foe speaking the same language made matters worse. Friend shot at friend, or fought side by side with a foe until some chance

showed the two were enemies, and then they flew at each other. Prisoners were taken and retaken in a moment. One man would go up to another, thinking him to be one of his own, find himself a prisoner, at once knock down his captor with a blow of his fist, and flee into the darkness, only to have the experience reversed. It was a general mix-up of blood and hatred, the blind fighting the blind, and the fury of the contest hastened its end. Tired, torn, and breathless, the two bodies finally separated, and as the British reenforcements began to come in and tip the well-balanced beam, Jackson drew off his forces. The enemy had learned their lesson; they did not press after him.

By ten o'clock, save for a few shots delivered at intervals, the fight had ceased. Men felt their ways over the dark, water-sodden plain, hunting for the wounded. These were gathered up, and together with the British prisoners, sent back to the city. The attack, while a failure from one point of view, was a great success from another; it made the

enemy halt on the plain and left him entirely without the means of protection, and true to Jackson's threat the previous noon, they did little sleeping on American soil.

The military problem that had suddenly arisen was one easy of answer. The British must make the next move; they must either attack or retreat the way they had come; there was no alternative, and Jackson roused himself to meet the issue, as not for a moment did he dream that the English would respect him or his army sufficiently to retreat without striking an aggressive blow.

By one o'clock that night the fog had lifted somewhat. The air suddenly turned very cold and the stiffened bodies of the dead were touched with hoar-frost. By this time the Americans had formed entirely across the land, from swamp to river, and thousands of camp-fires winked back the sparkle given by the camp-fires of the now puzzled British. From the innumerable lights that dotted the black plain it appeared that the American army was much greater than in reality, and

behind the encompassing fires, Jackson, with his generals, held a council of war.

It was not an extended meeting. Soon it was resolved to fall back to behind the Rodriguez Canal at break of day, fortify the position in the best way possible, and there await the enemy. To strengthen the defense the Carolina and the Louisiana were to be anchored in the river in such a way as to rake with their cannons the highroad along the bank.

The morning found the Americans at their destined point. Hours before word had been sent to New Orleans, and by the time the little army had retreated from the battle-field every species of cart, barrow, shovel, pick, or any of the means for digging or transporting earth that the city could furnish, was at hand waiting for them. Parton says that then came "such a digging, shoveling, and heaping up of earth as the delta of the Mississippi, or any other delta, has never seen since Adam delved."

In truth it was a busy time. Each com-

pany was given its line to fortify, and each company did its best to outdo all the rest. Men who had never worked with aught but their heads now worked with their hands and laughed at the blood and blisters that ensued. Dandies dug instead of dressing; lovers forgot their ladies, and swung a pick with a lustiness not born of the passion found in parlors. All were to their knees in mud and water, yet never was there an army more cheerful or more willing or more wide awake to future probabilities.

The embankment rose steadily, though not with magical rapidity, and there was a reason for this slowness. The delta of the Mississippi, in common with all deltas, is made up of the deposited silt and soft, alluvial soil which the river had brought down and deposited ages before. Were it not for the great levees which confine the "Father of Waters" this almost perfectly level plain would be covered at every rise of the stream, but even thus reclaimed for agriculture, it is only a skin of earth so unstable that it

quakes under a heavy tread. Three feet below the surface is water and loose mud, and to make an embankment sufficiently high to form a strong defense the land for a long distance about was fairly peeled of its soil. This took time, and it was fortunate for Jackson that the enemy was too frightened or too busy to advance. Had they even then pushed on with vigor, without doubt the city would have fallen into their hands.

But not a movement was made against the ununiformed horde, which with pick and shovel skinned the face of Mother Earth and hauled the rich soil to heighten the embankment—the porous wall which was to shut out the invaders. On December 24th—the day before Christmas—the wall was raised in some places to a height of five feet and was a mile long. The erst-while shallow, dry, and grass-grown ditch had been deepened so that two or three feet of water stood in it. The earth had been thrown on the side toward the city and held

in place with stakes. One end of this rampart terminated on the river, the other in a swampy wood which made a flank movement by the enemy impossible, then two field-pieces were planted on it in such a manner as to command the highroad. Opposite the river end of the entrenchment, and across the stream, another earthwork was built later; this so that the British could not cross, plant a battery, and enfilade the American breastworks at long range.

In old histories we are told of how Jackson fought from behind cotton-bales, but this is only true in part. So scarce was earth, or any material which would stop a cannon-ball, that many cotton-bales were in the beginning set on the line of the breastworks, but before the final and grand attack by Pakenham they were so knocked about by heavy balls as to be a menace instead of a protection; moreover, they readily caught fire and sent forth a thick and offensive smoke that made the aiming of a gun a matter of guesswork. Jackson at once dis-

carded cotton-bales, and the real battle of New Orleans was fought without them. The British were also in a quandary for breastwork material. Being short of earth and having no cotton-bales at hand, they seized upon hundreds of hogsheads of sugar belonging to neighboring plantations and placed them before their lines; but the American cannon-balls had little respect for them. Sugar has not the dead weight of sand, and the round shot from Jackson's lines tore through the mass as through paper and went their hurtling and death-dealing ways far to the British rear. Sugar-barrels were discarded, and in the end the walls of both sides were built of earth and flesh and blood.

CHAPTER XV

THE ENGLISH ADVANCE

But the wily American general did not confine himself to defensive operations, although he dared not sacrifice his men by exposure in the open field. He seized upon the Mississippi itself, and made it do part of his work. First, he cut the levee above the British, and the road and plains between the two armies were soon three feet under water; then he sent an engineer below the enemy and cut the levee again. The water poured in and the British found themselves on an island. Had the river been at high water the result of this move must have been to drown out the enemy, but, as it happened, the flood ran lower and lower, and finally the roads came in sight, but the country was now a sea of mud.

During all of this time the British were

being reenforced from their ships eighty miles away. When they became strong enough they were going to attack, mud or no mud, but before they were sufficiently organized to advance they were in a sorry plight. Not only were they confined to a small strip of comparatively dry land, but the devil of gunpowder was at work against them. The two little ships, which had anchored within easy range, now began to pour in a storm of cannon-balls which swept the plain and drove every man to cover. Companies could not form, large movements were out of the question, and even the routine of daily military life could not be performed in safety. Men crouched in wet ditches with their heads held low, or lay hidden in outhouses and behind slight obstructions. Death hovered everywhere. The cold and reeking ground threatened death, and above it the air was full of flying missiles. This state of things was most exasperating to the enemy, as they could neither attack their foe on the river nor defend themselves from the blast

that swept over the land. Many of the British officers had boasted that they would take their Christmas dinners in New Orleans, Admiral Cochrane among the rest, and when this had been reported to Jackson he remarked with a dry humor that it might be so, but in that event *he* would preside at the meal. But they did not take their Christmas dinner in the city, and it had become a matter of doubt as to their getting dinner at all, as the flying balls from the ships made cooking well-nigh impossible. The invaders, instead of besieging, were in reality besieged. This state of things could not last.

And yet, while the gust of fire and water was being sent by the Americans against their enemies, at Ghent, three thousand miles away, peace between the two belligerent nations had already been signed. But neither of the armies knew it. A single stroke of the pen had called a halt to brotherly hatred, but about New Orleans brotherly hatred waxed hotter and hotter. British pride had

stiffened to the breaking-point; American energy had in no wise weakened.

Christmas was a blue day for the invaders, but its somberness was somewhat lightened by the arrival in camp of the supreme commander of the army, General, or, rather, Major-General, Sir Edward Pakenham. This officer was worshiped by his men. He had served on the Spanish Peninsula with prominent success and had decided talents for matters military. Perhaps additional glamor hovered over him from the fact that he was both the friend and brother-in-law of the great Wellington. He had not directed the latter moves of the British army on its advance to New Orleans, and certain it is that had he done so he would not have fallen into the mistake made by General Keane; he would not have allowed himself to be cooped up on a few acres of unstable land. He set about altering matters at once. He saw that it would be impossible to even form his troops until the offending gunboats on the river were out of the way, and at

once decided to blow the Carolina from the face of the earth.

That little vessel was anchored near the western bank opposite the camp, but owing to the lack of wind and the strength of the current, she was practically a fixture—a mere floating battery. She could not escape save by dropping down the stream, and this would have put an end to her usefulness as effectually as though sunk. Two miles above her lay the much more formidable Louisiana, but, strange to relate, Pakenham devoted his first and greatest energy against the former vessel, which had but one gun of any power, instead of sinking the Louisiana and then knocking the Carolina to pieces at his leisure.

To obtain his desired end he sent back to the ships for heavy guns—heavy guns which had to be rafted eighty miles. It took four days to get them, and then they were mounted on the levee on the night of the 26th—twelve of them: nine field-pieces, two howitzers, and a mortar, together with a furnace for heating balls.

On the morning of the 27th the new battery opened its attack with a white-hot shot which lodged in the timbers of the Carolina and set her afire. The little vessel replied with its single heavy gun, but the weight of heated metal thrown at her was too much for her, and after half an hour of hard knocks, when his schooner was doomed, one man killed and six wounded, Captain Henly, her commander, deserted her and with his crew escaped to shore. Shortly after his landing the vessel blew up with a terrible report that shook the jelly-like earth for miles around and set the non-combatants in New Orleans agape with fear.

And yet, after the incredible labor of dragging twelve heavy guns, a furnace, and tons of ammunition for a distance of eighty-odd miles, the British had destroyed one twelve-pound cannon and several smaller ones, killed one man, and wrecked a vessel that could not have stood a moderate gale at sea.

In the meanwhile the Louisiana had escaped. Having more at stake and no wind

to help her, she got out her boats and men and was towed, against the current, to a point out of range. The nine guns she carried might have been silenced forever had Pakenham possessed the wit to have made her his first mark; later he undoubtedly wished he had—for she is yet to do yeoman's service.

The same day was a busy one for the Americans, for the little battle did not interrupt their duties. The ditch was being widened and deepened, the earth embankment heightened, but the works were far from finished. Two large cannon were added to the two already in position, and the next morning another showed its black mouth pointing outward; later, the escaped crew from the Carolina, now expert with heavy artillery, came to work them.

The morning of the 28th dawned bright and bracing, yet soft and beautiful. It was like a perfect September day in the North. Birds sang and the sun shone from a cool, though cloudless sky.

Very early in the day it became apparent

to Jackson that at last something was about to happen. From the roof of his headquarters—a plantation house a little behind the lines—he could view the distant enemy by means of an old telescope he had borrowed. Much had he wondered at the long delay of his opponent. That the Americans had been allowed five days to strengthen themselves argued that Pakenham had something up his sleeve the nature of which was to be held in reserve. Jackson feared a crushing surprise of some sort, and it was not without anxiety that he applied the ancient tube to his eye and marked the British forming in columns on the now safe plain. If it was to be an assault he knew how to act and would be ready; if a subterfuge to veil some sharp dodge of a military genius, he would do his best to meet the emergency. He ordered the Louisiana to be ready to veer to the end of her long cable and sweep the plain in front of the American line as soon as the enemy appeared; then every man was sent to his post of duty.

From the roof of his headquarters he could view the distant enemy.

The works of the Americans were only known in part to Pakenham. He was aware of the breastwork, but was unaware of the ditch and the fact that the Louisiana—a powerful battery—was in position at the end of the American line. The conformation of the defenses toward the cypress swamp was more open to his observation, but he knew nothing of the force behind it; the right wing (or river end) was hidden from view by a number of buildings belonging to the Chalmette plantation, and here was the strength of the work. The Louisiana was also hidden from the enemy until he came fairly within range of her guns. Thinking the before-mentioned buildings might shield the British during their attack, Jackson had them filled with combustibles and arranged to fire them at the proper moment by red-hot balls. So far they had been an admirable screen for him.

Pakenham was in high spirits that bright and beautiful morning, and his confidence was shared by his army. He had determined

to take a close look at his quiet enemy, and hoped to find matters in such a shape as to permit him to tear a hole in the low defense and send his army hurrying along to New Orleans. However, he was wise enough not to call this movement a direct attack; it was to be a mere reconnaissance, the reconnoitering party to consist of the comfortable force of twelve thousand men. His curiosity demanded satisfaction—and received it.

With the music of bands, rattling of drums, and blare of bugles, the showy columns advanced along the high road, four miles or more, without a sign of opposition, their flags flying in the merry breeze, the sun glinting with blinding radiance along the waving rise and fall of rows upon rows of polished steel barrels and bayonets. It might have been a dress parade from the precision with which the army marched, from the rich scarlet of the uniforms, the gold and plumes of the officers. All was confidence and gaiety until a turn in the road showed the black cannon on the entrenchment, the good

ship Louisiana slowly veering to the extreme length of her immense cable, and the men, matches in hand, awaiting the signal. When the signal came Pakenham had had his look at the Americans, the nearest look he ever obtained.

Suddenly the quiet was broken by a crash, "which," said one present, "sounded as though the universe had collapsed." Fourteen cannon and untold hundreds of rifles opened upon the oncoming British. Like magic the Chalmette buildings burst into flames, and the heat and smoke from these soon became thorns in the flesh of the enemy. The artillery service was wonderfully accurate, even the suffering English acknowledging their astonishment at the brilliant marksmanship of the American gunners. Round shot, so fired that they skipped along the surface of the ground, tore through the solid mass of the enemy, tossing men, the parts of men, and the dead and wounded together into the air. Riflemen, almost unseen, fired, and fell back for

others to take their places, and the black mud-bank was edged with a fringe of flame —wicked spurts that carried death with each one, for the Americans were wasting no lead that day.

It was too much for flesh and blood to bear. The infantry was ordered from the road and formed in the fields somewhat out of range of the great cannon, and the British artillery was brought up to oppose the withering fire of the Americans. But it was of no use. Men were shot down at the guns so fast that at last there was none who would serve them, and they lay dismounted and deserted until evening, when a band of marines ran in, lifted them on to their broad shoulders, and so saved them from capture by the patriots.

But the infantry, now out of artillery fire, went bravely forward to carry the breastwork, but they were halted by the ditch, which had not been taken into account. It was death to proceed, death to stand still, and death to go backward. Here panic

seized vast bodies of men. Many ran into the canal, the depth of which was unknown, and knelt among the reeds and grasses, attempting to hide from the terrible marksmen; many more, unhurt, dropped on the open field and lay there, saving their lives by taking on the stillness of death, while others crawled behind clumps of bushes or lay prone in shallow and slimy ditches. All thoughts of attacking were blown to the winds; those who had not been shot, or had hidden, began a precipitate retreat, and the immediate business of the British commander was to get his men out of the predicament in which he had placed them. The troops did not draw off in well-ordered retreat, but covered themselves as best they could until dark, when, regiment by regiment, sometimes company by company, and much more frequently, man by man, they stole off. There was no pursuit.

This is the way Parton sums it up: "What a day for the heroes of the Peninsula and the stately Ninety-third Highlanders

—lying low in wet ditches, some of them for seven hours, under that relentless cannonade, and then slinking away behind fences, huts, and burning houses, or even crawling along on the bottom of ditches, happy to get beyond the reach of those bounding balls, that 'knocked down the soldiers,' says Captain Cook, 'and tossed them into the air like old bags!'

"And what a day for General Jackson and his four thousand, who saw the magnificent advance of the morning, not without misgivings, and then beheld the most splendid and imposing army they had ever seen sink, as it were, into the earth and vanish from their sight!

"This reconnaissance cost General Pakenham a loss of fifty killed and wounded. The casualties on the American side were nine killed and eight wounded."

CHAPTER XVI

THE ARTILLERY DUEL

What was to be done after this fiasco? Pakenham kept his hand very close—so close that Jackson was puzzled, but he went on strengthening his lines. A mile or so behind the existing defense he started another, and still to the rear of that marked out a third. If the city was to fall it would cost the British all it was worth to them.

For three days nothing happened. The British lay two miles below, in plain sight of the Americans, but they made no move otherwise than to appear very busy among themselves. Were they preparing to depart? Not yet. From the strength of the American works Pakenham had come to the conclusion that they must be taken by regular approaches—approaches such as are

used in siege operations. By planting batteries nearer and nearer and beating down the breastworks with heavy shot, matters would be in shape for a successful assault. The business on hand, then, was to get a large number of heavy guns from the fleet.

On the last day of December, 1814, the British had rafted and dragged twenty long eighteen-pounders and ten twenty-four-pounders into camp. That night nearly half the army marched out to within one thousand feet of the American position, and there, silently and under cover of the darkness, they performed the prodigious feat of constructing six batteries of five heavy guns each, and the Americans had no suspicion of what was in progress. Once or twice a dull pounding was heard by the outpost and reported, but it was not dreamed that guns of large caliber were being mounted so near. As arranged, the British artillery outweighed and outnumbered the opposing metal by three to one.

When the batteries had been constructed

the army laid down among the rushes, some distance in the rear, there to await the morning, the cannonade, the breach, and the order for a rush. Victory was a foregone conclusion—and might have been a true one save for those barrels of sugar with which the British had built their battery walls. Earth was scarce, and the making of earth embankments took time—and time was precious; the batteries had to be finished by daybreak, for the spiteful and well-served American guns would make work on walls impossible after that.

But that something was in the wind Jackson already knew. In the night a deserter from the British had brought in information that Pakenham was placing two heavy howitzers on the levee for the purpose of destroying the Louisiana should she again swing into position for the purpose of sweeping the plain. Therefore the Louisiana remained at her safe anchorage above the lines, but Commodore Patterson was wise enough to send his crew to the defenses

across the river, and there they were on hand to work its guns against the enemy.

The morning of January 1, 1815, broke still and foggy; so thick was the air that objects could be distinguished but a few rods distant. It was holiday time, and Jackson, knowing nothing of the menace so near his line and feeling fairly sure of being uninterrupted, somewhat slackened the discipline of his army, and in deference to the day decided to hold a grand review of his forces on the ground lying between his headquarters and the entrenchments.

The men had spruced up and formed. It was about ten o'clock, and the unsuspecting army was about being put through its paces before its general, when, like a transformation scene in a theater, the blanket of fog suddenly lifted.

The whole scene was now in full view of the waiting enemy, who were, as stated, about one thousand feet away. They saw the dressed ranks of the Americans; they heard the blare of the bands and noted the fact

that the ramparts were well-nigh deserted. Why did they not charge? With a rush they might have run over the walls and swept the platoons and battalions into wild confusion—only—there was the ditch, the depth of which was unknown, and the bridge ladders were still in the rear.

No, the British did not charge as they might have done with success at that moment, but they did the next best thing. With their thirty guns they opened fire full upon the orderly and surprised mass of men, who had no more looked for this than for the opening of the earth. In an instant all was rampant confusion. Companies, battalions, regiments, officers, and men fell into the direst disorder, and, without exception, ran. But they did not run toward New Orleans; they ran to the entrenchments, where alone lay safety, and where also lay their posts of duty.

But it was a disorderly mob. The suddenness and fierceness of the unexpected cannonade was temporarily demoralizing, and

it was some time—say ten minutes—before the American gunners had recovered proper order and were ready to return the fire, and then the smoke and fog were too thick to permit of a sure aim. The British batteries were narrow-fronted and lay low on the great wet plain; they were not easily seen, but when the wind finally tossed aside the murky curtain and exposed them, there came such a blast of fire and shock from the American line, that, coupled with the thirty guns already bellowing, it shook the unfirm land like a mighty earthquake.

Across the river Patterson's men engaged the howitzers erected on the levee, and for an hour and a half pandemonium was let loose. That the British did much damage is without question, but the damage done was not to the embankment they had hoped to level, for their best-aimed shot only sunk deep into the spongy mass and did no harm. The cotton-bales on which Jackson had depended, especially those near the river end of the line, were treated unceremoniously, being

knocked about by round shot and frequently set on fire by Congreve rockets. Several casualties resulted in the effort to quench the flames and end the suffocating smoke, but for all this there was no breach for the waiting forces to storm, and the damage was rapidly repaired. Some of the balls flew over the mark and did execution among those serving the guns, and only ended their mad career far in the rear, where, too, they killed several men. One or two guns were injured by the bombardment and several ammunition cases were exploded, blowing up with loud reports, at which the British cheered.

The house which was Jackson's head-quarters was so played upon and riddled as to be useless. The general's staff had been thunderstruck as the first shots crashed through the walls, but though one or two officers were knocked down and covered with *débris*, no one was seriously hurt.

For all the thunder and crashing and hurly-burly, at no time during this artillery

duel was the line weakened. It was nearly noon before it became apparent to the entrenched patriots that the British fire was slackening. Was it in preparation for assault? The defenders waited, every nerve stretched tightly. Presently the thunder of the improvised batteries ceased altogether, and then the Americans held their fire and prepared for the shock, each moment expecting to see the British columns advancing with fixed bayonets.

Slowly the smoke lifted, but not so slowly but that it went quickly enough for the brave commander and his army to see the enemy in full retreat. As the air cleared it was observed that the batteries erected so suddenly and hopefully had been knocked to ruins; the menaces of a few hours before were now but heaps of earth, broken staves, and useless metal. The barrels of sugar had been built into a house of cards. The American shot had torn through them and gone onward, where they had killed many in the waiting army, which, by the way, had not

lingered for the end, but had retreated out of harm's path. Great guns broken and dismounted, carriages in splinters, and indescribable ruin met the gaze of the surprised Americans, and there, also, in the distance, were the gunners—the British marines—running away as fast as their legs could carry them. Again the enemy had been repulsed.

What a shout arose! It was an outburst of mental exaltation, and it served to quicken the pace of the frightened runners. Rough men shook hands with or embraced each other while tears born of excitement rolled down their cheeks. They wanted to leap over the breastworks and pursue, but cooler heads prevailed, and presently the victorious army fell into their normal order and the British returned to their camp.

As a result of such a storm of metal it is a wonder that the losses on both sides were not greater. The enemy had thirty killed and about as many wounded; the Americans, eleven killed and twenty-three wounded, and

of these latter it is said that the majority were not on the firing line, but doing duty or acting as reserves far in the rear.

CHAPTER XVII

PREPARATIONS

And was this second advance of the invading army to be the last? Had Pakenham become discouraged? Would he retreat? Many well-balanced minds thought so, Jackson among the rest, but the general so lacked confidence in his own expressed opinion that he kept every available man at work repairing the damage done and strengthening the defenses. Among other improvements, he got rid of the well-nigh useless cotton bales and used earth in their stead.

Monday passed without alarm; so did Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, and in the meantime the American army had been reenforced by the 2,200 Kentuckians referred to before. A poor, bedraggled body of men they were as they marched into New Orleans, ragged, hungry, and almost entirely

unarmed. The city was nearly exhausted of all kinds of arms and clothing, but, like the young giantess she was and is, she lifted herself to the occasion and soon had the shivering and forlorn soldiers covered by clothing made from blankets; they were fed, too, but as a body they were not armed. Some few found old muskets, but most of them were furnished with arms borrowed from the reserves and the sailors, and thus they went to the front.

The enemy was also being strengthened, for during those days of no active hostilities 1,700 regulars, just arrived from England, were added to the army, thus bringing the British fighting force up to more than seven thousand well-equipped men.

On Friday night Jackson received his first inkling of what was going forward in the silent camp two miles below, and the news terminated his period of harrowing uncertainty, and made it sure that Pakenham intended to try his teeth once more, and on a grander scale than before. The British

general had determined to reduce the American defenses across the river, and at the same time move all his men not thus occupied against the main line. It was to be a great assault *en masse*—a storming party which was to comprehend his entire army.

But to convey men across the river he must have boats, and to get his boats on to the swift bosom of the Mississippi he must cut a canal across the solid ground and connect the waters of the lagoon, up which the army had originally advanced, with the river itself. It was a prodigious piece of labor performed under the greatest disadvantage, but by night and day alternate shifts of men dug, and dug in water and out. At last the ditch was completed, but it became almost useless, as will be seen.

This plan had been laid almost immediately after the second repulse, and it was this canal on which the British were engaged during the days of their seeming inaction. If the storming party which were to move through it should capture the lesser work on

the west bank and turn its guns on Jackson's flank, the American general would be obliged to fall back to his inner defenses, and even New Orleans would be in danger.

But the American general was quite as well aware of this as was the British general, though he was unable to effectually guard against the western attack, but here it was that the Mississippi took a hand in the matter, and, just as the canal was completed, the trap ready to be sprung, and a British force of 1,400 men was about to move, the water fell so low that the plan balked. The boats would not float. A number were pushed over the mud and into the river, but in the end less than five hundred men, under the daring Colonel Thornton, succeeded in reaching the western bank.

It is well there were no more. Colonel Morgan, who commanded the threatened fortification, had but 800 men, and they militia, poorly armed and entirely unused to war. It is stated by critics that Jackson should have sent a greater and better body of

soldiers to this very important point, but he knew he must bear the brunt of the attack on the eastern side of the river, and had but 2,500 men to oppose something over twice that number.

The failure of the boats was one large point in favor of the Americans, but there was another incident which had even a greater bearing on the result of the day.

As from every army there are deserters, so one left the Americans, worked his way through the outposts and pickets, and appeared before Pakenham. That general questioned the man very closely, and was told that the weakest part of the American line was at the edge of the cypress swamp, where were posted the forces of Generals Coffee and Carroll. This was true. The embankment was here the weakest in construction, but then there lay the coolest and deadliest shots in the whole army. The deserter forgot to tell this, nor did he tell (because he did not know) that after he ran away General Adair chanced to bring to that

very point one thousand fire-eating Kentuckians to act as a reserve. This ignorance and omission proved fatal to Pakenham, for he at once determined to concentrate his greatest strength on what he considered Jackson's vulnerable point.

It was Commodore Patterson who discovered the imminence of the attack. He had spent the night on the western bank of the Mississippi, opposite the newly made canal, and though he could not see, he heard enough to know that the British were about to cross the stream. He hurriedly sent word to Jackson and prayed for more troops for his own side of the river, but Jackson, waked from his midnight doze by the messenger, refused the request as one impossible to comply with, and then roused his aides, who, wrapped in their cloaks, were sleeping on the floor of his room.

"Gentlemen, we have slept enough! Rise; I must go and see Coffee!"

It was about three o'clock on the morning of January 8, 1815. By four o'clock

every man was at his post of duty and every foot of the embankment was lined with heads, the eyes of which peered over the great field in a vain endeavor to penetrate the darkness and mists of the early morning. There was not a soul there but felt that something great was soon to happen.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GRAND ASSAULT

LET us leave them watching and turn our attention to what was going on within the British lines.

While the Americans were forming to await the expected attack, General Pakenham was on the bank of the river watching the tardy getting away of Colonel Thornton's men. After looking at them for some time he expressed his impatience at his hard luck, and, remarking that he could not wait longer for Thornton's move, rode away. It was now on the verge of dawn, and as he wished to have the heads of his columns well to the front by daylight, he determined to act at once.

As he rode toward the army he was met with information that the leading regiment, the Forty-fourth, under Colonel Mullins,

had gone ahead without taking the bridge ladders which were to be rushed over the ditch and across which the following army was to pass. This was a fatal omission on the part of Colonel Mullins, and afterward cost him his commission, and by the time the ladders and fascines had been obtained the men who carried them and who should have been far in front were now well to the rear, as in the meantime the whole army had been ordered forward—all but the reserves under General Lambert.

The first movement made, there was no stopping it; an army is too unwieldy and has too great an inertia to be handled with ease and in a moment. Forward went the columns with the determined and stolid tread that characterizes the British regulars to this day; grim old veterans whose faces reflected their doubts of the wisdom of the attack, and gay young blades laughing and joking from nervousness and a desire to hide it. .Many higher than the obedient private felt that a mistake was being made

and openly expressed themselves against the judgment displayed in ordering an open assault. Colonel Dale handed his watch and a letter to his regimental physician and asked that they might be forwarded to his wife, saying he would die that day. Colonel Mullins openly cursed his superior for having doomed his regiment to certain slaughter. He said: "Their dead bodies are to be used as a bridge for the rest of the army to march over." Others were less outspoken, but equally depressed.

If Pakenham himself became alive to the prevailing fear and was penetrated by doubts of his own wisdom, it was then too late to alter matters. The single rocket that whizzed aloft through the raw morning air and which was the signal (as well as a warning to the Americans) for the left to assault, settled the affair forever. The match which fired that useless rocket fired the train that led to one of the greatest disasters ever met with by a British force.

By six o'clock both right and left col-

umns were well on their way. The dull morning concealed from the American outposts the vast concourse of men until they were close upon them, then the lonely watchers fled in haste and carried to Jackson the word that the British were coming.

Every man behind the defenses now eagerly awaited the moment when the red columns should heave in sight—and none so eagerly as the gunners, who were to engage long before the dull crimson line came within range of the riflemen. Every piece was loaded and primed, every artilleryman stood at pose and poise, the match-man flare in hand. The greater cannon contained solid shot, the smaller guns were loaded to the muzzle with musket-balls and pieces of scrap-iron.

Parton says: "Lieutenant Spotts, of battery Number Six, was the first man in the American lines who descried through the fog the dim red line of General Gibbs's advancing column, far down the plain close to the forest. The thunder of his great gun

broke the stillness. Then there was silence again, for the shifting fog, or the altered position of the enemy, concealed him from view once more. The fog lifted again, and soon revealed both divisions, which, with their detached companies, seemed to cover two-thirds of the plain, and gave the Americans a repetition of the military spectacle which they had witnessed on the 28th of December."

Let us remain a moment with the attack on the left—the so-called weak point. Facing three batteries which were now playing on them, General Gibbs and his men rushed on, always steady and always closing the terrible gaps that opened in the wake of the round shot which tore through the mass. What might not such gallant men have accomplished had they but the missing ladders! As the ditch appeared before them there was a halt and the line became confused. Where are the fascines? Where are the ladders? Where is the Forty-fourth? Somewhere behind and useless. General Pakenham,

riding forward, found members of that regiment rushing around without purpose or direction. He was horrified at the sight. "For shame!" he cried. "*This* is the road you ought to go!" And he pointed toward the front.

In the meantime, Gibbs's halted column, unable to go forward and looking in vain for the delinquent ladder bearers, were being mowed down like grain, for now every rifle on the American left was blazing full upon them. When more than half their number had fallen they broke and fled, to the utter chagrin of their commander, who was forced to report to the general that his men would no longer obey him. Pakenham was furious. Placing his plumed hat on the point of his sword, he raised it high above his head and rode to the front of the disordered column. Voices could not be heard in the uproar, but his action was understood. Some of the men turned, and into the hail of lead and iron he spurred his horse. At once his right arm was struck and shattered and

his horse fell dead beneath him. Springing to his feet, he mounted the horse of one of his aides, and, apparently unconscious of his injury, followed his retreating column, commanding and imploring them to halt. Fired by the bravery of their commander, a few turned again, rushed through the ditch and scrambled up the steep and slippery earthwork, only to fall riddled by the storm of bullets that met them.

Once out of range of the terrible tempest, the disordered division reformed. Now was to come a greater attempt, and they divested themselves of their heavy knapsacks and all superfluous weight. They were reenforced, too, by the famous Highlanders, and the blare of the bagpipes droned above the thunder of the guns. Again they advanced to the front. This time they were to go on through the ditch, ladders or no ladders, and with the wounded but undaunted Pakenham leading and in plain sight, they rushed forward, with a result the details of which are sickening.

Men fell by the score; one discharge of the bullet-burdened cannon cut down two hundred; the plain was reeking with blood. So rapid was the American fire that the top of the breastwork looked like a thin sheet of flame through which at frequent intervals there leaped the longer and fiercer spurts of the artillery. It was human butchery, and nothing made of flesh and blood could endure such a fusilade. The column faltered under the whirlwind of death, then halted, then fell into wild confusion. Pakenham at last realized the nature of his undertaking and, turning to an officer, he shouted, "Call up the reserves!" At that moment the contents of a thirty-two-pounder filled with grape-shot struck the group of which he was the center. Again his horse fell dead beneath him and a ball tore open his thigh. Ready hands lifted him, but ere he could be borne to a place of safety he was struck in the body and at once lapsed into unconsciousness. He never spoke again, but beneath a tree some distance in the rear breathed his

last in a few moments, fortunately for his peace of mind, ignorant of the result of the attack.

Immediately after the fall of Pakenham Gibbs fell and died in agony the following day; General Keane was wounded and borne away; Colonel Dale, of the Highlanders, was killed outright, thus making good his prophecy, and but a little later panic seized the entire right of the British army; the troops fell into the wildest disorder and fled in terror from the field, a crazed rabble.

But not all. Even running they dropped under the relentless fire, some never to rise again, but hundreds, unhurt, fell to the earth in sheer fright, and there lay for hours. Every depression, every slimy ditch, shallow or not, was packed with demoralized soldiers, sometimes two or three deep, each gone temporarily mad from dread of sudden death.

There were but few exceptions to this state of affairs on the right, and it is here pleasant to note the devotion of a few noble

souls. Let us again refer to Parton for a picture.

"Major Wilkinson, followed by Lieutenant Lavack and twenty men, pressed on to the ditch, floundered across it, climbed the breastwork, and raised his head and shoulders above the summit, upon which he fell riddled with balls. The Tennesseeans and Kentuckians defending that part of the lines, struck with admiration by such heroic conduct, lifted his still breathing body and conveyed it tenderly behind the works.

"'Bear up, my dear fellow,' said Major Simley of the Kentucky reserves; 'you are too brave a man to die!'

"'I thank you from my heart,' whispered the dying man. 'It's all over with me. You can render me a favor; it is to communicate to my commander that I fell on your parapet, and died like a soldier and a true Englishman.'"

Strange as it may appear, Lavack was not struck, but reached the top of the breastwork and leaped down among the

Americans. Thinking he had been followed by his men, he demanded the officer in charge at that point to surrender, but was very politely informed that as he was alone he might consider himself a prisoner. Thereupon he turned around, and to his utter consternation discovered that his brave followers had been shot down, his entire regiment had disappeared as if by magic, and those of it who were not dead or disabled were burrowing into the ground in an endeavor to get beyond the reach of American bullets. His own freedom from a wound of any kind was nothing short of miraculous.

Behind that part of the breastworks which had been so fiercely defended the greatest excitement prevailed. The reserves, no longer reserved, had rushed into the fight with the greatest of glee. Much seeming confusion existed, for with men struggling to reach the parapet, firing into the smoke ahead, falling back to load, running with ammunition, and cheering and shouting from excitement, disorganization appeared to pre-

vail, but not for a moment were the defenders demoralized; never did they fail to obey orders.

And yet through all the volcano of hatred and strife, thunder, smoke, and blood, the center of the line was inactive. Both right and left wings of the army were hotly engaged, but here not a shot was fired by a small arm; instead, the band stationed near headquarters played national airs throughout the whole battle, which lasted *not more than twenty-five minutes*, and here Jackson and the surrounding and impatient force stood and acted as mere spectators. It was a wide stage on which the tragedy was enacted, and when the curtain of smoke was tossed aloft, the movements of all the actors were in plain sight. What must have been the old man's sensations when he saw the British right wing hurled back and destroyed, the left faring but little better, for here, again, the defenders of New Orleans turned their little mound of earth into a stream of bullet-laden fire. The British fell by hundreds until, unable to en-

dure the blast, whole regiments turned and ran or groveled in the earth as did their fellows at the opposite end of the line.

As the dense smoke settled down and closed the view of the plain, the firing still went on as fiercely as ever. Not knowing that the British had retreated, but fancying them forming for renewed assault, for two hours the Americans loaded their rifles and cannon and sent their shot singing over a field deserted by all save the dead, the wounded, and the cowering soldier.

Among those who had set forth but a short time before, all discipline was at an end until the panic-stricken men had returned to camp. The loss had been frightful. General Lambert, now suddenly at the head of the army, was appalled at the disaster. He was almost destitute of field-officers. There had been killed or wounded three major-generals, eight colonels and lieutenant-colonels, six majors, eighteen captains, and fifty-four lieutenants. Seven hundred privates were killed outright, fourteen hundred

wounded, and five hundred were taken prisoners during and after the action. Jackson's loss was exactly *eight men killed and thirteen wounded.* Of his dead, but two had fallen behind the real line of defense; of the others, two had been on outpost duty when shot, and four were killed while fighting skirmishers in the swamp. What a contrast! It does not take a military mind to see that some one had blundered.

At last the firing gradually ceased and the gunners rested to let their pieces cool and the smoke blow away. What a scene finally met the view of the anxious and awe-stricken watchers from the parapet! Prostrate men covered the field, writhing in agony, and no band could have drowned the great minor chord of the chorus of shrieks that rose from the plain. Save for a dim, red line far in the distance, the last of the retreating British, the wide stretch of flat land had been given up to the dead, the wounded, and the coward. Of the latter, Jackson said:

"I never had so grand and awful an idea

of the resurrection as on that day. After the smoke of the battle had cleared off somewhat, I saw in the distance more than five hundred Britons emerging from the heaps of their dead comrades all over the plain, rising up, and still more distinctly visible as the field became clearer, coming forward and surrendering as prisoners of war to our soldiers. They had fallen at our first fire upon them without having received as much as a scratch, and lay prostrate as if dead until the close of the action."

CHAPTER XIX

PROGRESS

But with all this, the Americans were to witness disaster to themselves. For on the other side of the river Colonel Thornton with his four hundred men had carried the works, beaten back its eight hundred defenders, and were driving them up the west bank and toward the city. The fair prospects of the American army were suddenly clouded. Jackson saw that if Patterson had left a single cannon unspiked the British could turn it upon his victorious army and nullify its past success; indeed, if unmolested, they could proceed up the river until opposite New Orleans, and, with a single field-piece, have the city at their mercy.

Fortunately, Thornton's success had been a tardy one and the main British army had been effectually disposed of by the time he

had routed Patterson. Thus Jackson had plenty of men at his disposal and was enabled to throw a strong force across the river by marching it back to the city and sending it over by the ferry there. The action was prompt and the retreating militia were soon met by reenforcements under General Humbert, who rallied them, but before they could attempt to storm the works from which they had been driven, General Lambert, too shocked and perplexed to realize the importance of Thornton's success, ordered the captured works to be abandoned and the British to return to the eastern side of the river. The Americans, now eager for battle, again took possession of the evacuated defense, drilled the spikes from the cannon, and waited for another attack. But they waited in vain; no attack came, neither was there as much as an alarm on either side of the river.

For Lambert, sick at heart and utterly unable to cope with the situation, did not follow up his immense advantage; instead, he sent in a flag of truce, and after some de-

lay a truce was allowed, during which the dead were to be buried.

But they were not buried that day nor evening. All night the dead on the field remained close to the American army. What a harvest was here! Windrow upon windrow of red-coated humanity sacrificed to ambition and man's hatred for his brother. There they lay, a lesson that the world is just beginning to study—a commentary on war. So let us leave the ghastly scene; for this, even to-day, history can not show a fair excuse for England.

For ten days the two armies lay near each other, the Americans unmolested, the British suffering from an occasional cannonade from across the river. Nothing was left for them but ignominious retreat, and on the 18th they stole away after having, with immense labor, constructed a flimsy, reed-covered road through the morass. Over this, regiment by regiment, they withdrew in the night, leaving dummy sentinels standing, their flags flying, and their cannon destroyed. In England

the move was considered a most masterly one, and brought General Lambert a knighthood; Pakenham, the brave and foolish, was well-nigh forgotten, while it was proclaimed that Lambert was a military genius. A number of the dangerously wounded who were too low to be moved, were by letter consigned to the care of Jackson.

The enemy had gone. They had come in glory and hope; they had retreated hopeless, decimated, and covered with mud. It was some hours before the move was even suspected by Jackson, but when upon investigation it was discovered, the great campaign was practically ended, though the line was still maintained, and military discipline was as strict as ever.

For though the British had retreated to their ships, there still lay the ships, a menace, and no one knew where the next blow would fall.

During this period of inaction the men in the ditches, exposed to all the pernicious influences of cold, wet, and malaria, began to

sicken and die. Before the news of peace reached New Orleans more than five hundred had died, and the hospitals in the city were filled with sick soldiers.

It was on March 13th that the authoritative news of peace reached Jackson, though unofficial rumors had long preceded the welcome message. Then it was seen that the great battle had been without warrant; yet that did not affect the amount of praise showered on the victor and his troops. The latter were disbanded, and after a rest of four months the hero-general and now idol of the South was called to Washington by the Secretary of War. To Washington, therefore, went Jackson, taking with him his wife, and traveling all the way in a coach drawn by four horses, a piece of extravagance that brought his political enemies about his ears, who charged him with aristocratic pretensions, although a knowledge of the roads of those days shows that at times it was all the four could do to move the heavy vehicle; two horses could not have dragged it.

The result of his Washington visit was that he was appointed commander of the Southern military division, and soon after the Seminole Indians of Florida committed a number of outrages on United States citizens. To punish them Jackson pursued them into Florida (still Spanish territory), marching in and taking possession of a Spanish fort in his old vehement and high-handed way, and thus close to his enemy he scattered or killed the hostiles. In connection with this move he executed two Englishmen whom, he claimed, had incited the red men to outrage, and this incident came near to plunging the two nations into war again. However, he was exonerated by Congress, and the matter died.

CHAPTER XX

AMBITIONS SATISFIED

In 1821, when Florida was ceded to the United States, Jackson was appointed its Governor. But he had no taste for civil office, and after a series of incidents, ludicrous in reality, but tragic enough to those who suffered, he resigned the appointment and retired to private life. Home and its comforts were, for the time being, his only thoughts. He was now fifty-four years of age, prematurely old, and absolutely broken down, physically. His income, for those times, was large. One would have thought that, under these circumstances, ambition would have slept, and the man be content to pass in peace the remainder of his days, which were always attended with more or less pain. But with Andrew Jackson nothing slept. When

his State nominated him for the presidency of the United States, it was done without his hands pulling the wires, but he arose to the occasion, and reached for a bauble higher than those he had obtained.

Although he received more votes than any of the contestants, he was not elected by the people. A majority was necessary and, according to the then existing laws, the selection fell to the House of Representatives. There were three candidates—Jackson, Adams, and Crawford—and though our hero, his friends, and, indeed, the entire country considered Jackson's selection a foregone conclusion, Adams was chosen. There was political treachery somewhere, and Jackson never forgave those whom he considered active in bringing about the result.

But four years later he was nominated again, and though the campaign was shockingly personal, though every act of his life was laid bare, his motives misrepresented, his wife maligned, and his own character painted blacker than it could possibly be, he

was triumphantly elected, and again, four years after, elected to succeed himself.

His political acts have no place in a volume of the scope of this. Suffice it to say that he kept the country in a turmoil, although he kept peace abroad and inaugurated policies which exist to this day.

He was successful in nearly all he undertook to do. He killed the arrogant United States Bank. He humbled John C. Calhoun and the "nullifiers" of South Carolina. He triumphed over those political giants of that day Henry Clay and Daniel Webster. He raised the standard of citizenship in the nation. He was intensely patriotic and intensely opinionated, as such intense personages are sure to be, but, withal, he was open to conviction.

His wife died suddenly, just previous to his first inauguration, and from this prostrating blow he never recovered; it affected both his health and his spirits, for he loved her tenderly and loyally. He often remarked that heaven would be no heaven for him if

his wife was not there. This affliction was said to have aged him twenty years in a single day.

When he retired from the presidency he was an old man in years, being seventy, and older in body. He returned to his home, The Hermitage, to pass his remaining days, which were to be but few. He had been in the grasp of consumption for years; one lung was gone, the other affected, and he had frequent hemorrhages. His old wound, received in the duel with Dickinson, troubled him; the ball in his shoulder had been extracted while he was in the presidential chair.

But the still vigorous brain of the man kept him alive, or allowed him to die but slowly; he wore out, in fact. Shortly after his retirement he put his old life behind him and joined the church, as he had promised his wife he would do when his motives for doing so could not be impugned, and his later days were passed in reading his Bible and hymn-book and seeing his old and intimate friends.

On June, 8, 1845, this singular but great old man passed away as peacefully as most men fall asleep. He had made enemies by the hundreds, but friends by the thousands. He had been neither better nor worse than most men, but his overpowering individuality made both his vices and his virtues seem greater than they really were.

The whole country mourned him, and, as in the case of Washington, even his enemies united in saying kind things about him. Thus does death weave a mantle of charity for a shroud. Is it not a pity that the living but rarely feel its warmth?

(1)

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