

and become burdens to society. Others with few or no early advantages, by intense application, incessant industry, and careful self-culture, become valuable and useful members of the community to which they belong. Though all goodness and greatness are from God; though he must stand behind, and give success to all endeavor, much lies in our own hands. God gives the rich harvest to the man who skilfully and faithfully prepares the soil and scatters the seed. He gives a blessing, not to idleness, not to carelessness, but to patient and persevering toil. He gives success to the student and the statesman, but only where heart and mind are carefully cultivated and brought into active sympathy with the object sought. If God says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold," He means to do it only through that man's own effort. Some splendid minds have gone to waste, other very ordinary men have by dint of unwearied application, reached eminence. So far as it can be said of any one, James A. Garfield was a self-made man; with scarcely any circumstances in his favor; with no social influence, no wealth, no patronage, he worked his way to place and power. Let us glance at his record, as gathered from the sources within our reach.

He was born in Ohio, Nov. 19th, 1831, the youngest of four children, and left without a father at the age of two years. The little household, thus deprived of its head, was held together by the firm and kindly hand, of a wise and thoughtful mother, who resisted all suggestion to divide and scatter her family. At the death of his father the eldest boy was but nine years old. The backwoods farm required stronger hands than his, but they toiled on, sharing many hardships, and wringing success slowly from the world in which they were placed at such a disadvantage. The resolute mother determined to provide food for the minds as well as the bodies of her children, and when James was but five years of age she offered the corner of her lot as a site for a