

comforter in a peculiar set of dangers and difficulties such as are met with in our American wilderness. The crossing of a stormy ocean, the reclamation of the soil from nature, the fighting with savage men are mere generalities wherein some vague idea may be gained of true pioneer life. But it is only by following woman in her wanderings and standing beside her in the forest or in the cabin and by marking in detail the thousand trials and perils which surround her in such a position that we can obtain the true picture of the heroine in so many unmentioned battles.

The recorded sum total of an observation like this would be a noble history of human effort. It would show us the latent causes from which have come extraordinary effects. It would teach us how much this republic owes to its pioneer mothers, and would fill us with gratitude and self-congratulation—gratitude for their inestimable services to our country and to mankind, self-congratulation in that we are the lawful inheritors of their work, and as Americans are partakers in their glory.

In the preparation of this work particular pains have been taken to avoid what was trite and hackneyed, and at the same time preserve historic truth and accuracy. Use has been made to a limited extent of the ancient border books, selecting the most noteworthy incidents which never grow old because they illustrate a heroism, that like "renown and grace cannot die." Thanks are due to Mrs. Ellet, from whose interesting book entitled "Women of the Revolution," a few passages have been culled. The stories of Mrs. VanAlstine, of Mrs. Slocum, Mrs. McCalla, and Dicey Langston, and of Deborah Samson, are condensed from her accounts of those heroines.

A large portion of the work is, however, composed of incidents which will be new to the reader. The eye-witnesses of scenes which have been lately enacted upon the border have furnished the writer with materials for many of the most thrilling stories of frontier life, and which it has been his aim to spread before the reader in this work.