

It was that which made him a General, and a President for the time in which he served. He had vigorous thoughts, but not the faculty of arranging them in a regular composition, either written or spoken; and in formal papers he usually gave his draft to an aid, a friend, or a secretary, to be written over—often to the loss of vigor. But the thoughts were his own vigorously expressed; and without effort, writing with a rapid pen, and never blotting or altering; but, as Carlyle says of Cromwell, hitting the nail upon the head as he went. I have a great deal of his writing now, some on public affairs and covering several sheets of paper; and no erasures or interlineations anywhere. His conversation was like his writing, a vigorous flowing current, apparently without the trouble of thinking, and always impressive. His conclusions were rapid, and immovable, when he was under strong convictions; though often yielding, on minor points, to his friends. And no man yielded quicker when he was convinced; perfectly illustrating the difference between firmness and obstinacy. Of all the Presidents who have done me the honor to listen to my opinions, there was no one to whom I spoke with more confidence when I felt myself strongly to be in the right.

He had a load to carry all his life; resulting from a temper which refused compromises and bargaining, and went for a clean victory or a clean defeat, in every case. Hence, every step he took was a contest: and, it may be added, every contest was a victory. I have already said that he was elected a Major General in Tennessee—an election on which so much afterwards depended—by one vote. His appointment in the United States regular army was a conquest from the administration, which had twice refused to appoint him a Brigadier, and once disbanded him as a volunteer general, and only yielded to his militia victories. His election as President was a victory over politicians—as was every leading event of his administration.

I have said that his appointment in the regular army was a victory over the administration, and it belongs to the inside view of history, and to the illustration of government mistakes, and the elucidation of individual merit surmounting obstacles, to tell how it was. Twice passed by to give preference to two others in the West (General Harrison and General Winchester), once disbanded, and omitted in all the lists of

military nominations, how did he get at last to be appointed Major General? It was thus. Congress had passed an act authorizing the President to accept organized corps of volunteers. I proposed to General Jackson to raise a corps under that act, and hold it ready for service. He did so; and with this corps and some militia, he defeated the Creek Indians, and gained the reputation which forced his appointment in the regular army. I drew up the address which he made to his division at the time, and when I carried it to him in the evening, I found the child and the lamb between his knees. He had not thought of this resource, but caught at it instantly, adopted the address, with two slight alterations, and published it to his division. I raised a regiment myself, and made the speeches at the general musters, which helped to raise two others, assisted by a small band of friends—all feeling confident that if we could conquer the difficulty—master the first step—and get him upon the theatre of action, he would do the rest himself. This is the way he got into the regular army, not only unselected by the wisdom of government, but rejected by it—a stone rejected by the master builders—and worked in by an unseen hand, to become the corner stone of the temple. The aged men of Tennessee will remember all this, and it is time that history should learn it. But to return to the private life and personal characteristics of this extraordinary man.

There was an innate, unvarying, self-acting delicacy in his intercourse with the female sex, including all womankind; and on that point my personal observation (and my opportunities for observation were both large and various), enables me to join in the declaration of the belief expressed by his earliest friend and most intimate associate, the late Judge Overton, of Tennessee. The Roman general won an immortality of honor by one act of continence; what praise is due to Jackson, whose whole life was continence? I repeat: if he had been born in the time of Cromwell, he would have been a puritan. Nothing could exceed his kindness and affection to Mrs. Jackson, always increasing in proportion as his elevation, and culminating fortunes, drew cruel attacks upon her. I knew her well, and that a more exemplary woman in all the relations of life, wife, friend, neighbor, relative, mistress of slaves—never lived, and never

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