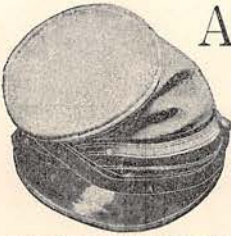


## PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF STONEWALL JACKSON.



STONEWALL JACKSON'S CAP.

Major Jed. Hotchkiss, who owns the "old gray cap," writes that Jackson wore it through the Valley, Seven Days, and Second Manassas campaigns. At Frederick City, in the Antietam campaign, he bought a soft hat for his general, who, at Frederickburg, gave him the cap as a souvenir.—EDITOR.

AMONG Southern leaders, not one name stands forth with such unique individuality as that of Stonewall Jackson. Under any circumstances, he was a man *sui generis*; and none who came into close enough contact with him to see into his inner nature were willing to own that they had ever known just such another man. As he was a member of the same family as myself for several years, dwelling under the

same roof, and as there existed between us as close an intimacy as brother and sister know, it may not be thought out of the way to present the following record of Jackson's idiosyncrasies, written the first year after the war, before any life or sketch of him whatsoever had appeared. Knowing him as I did, and having the opportunity of witnessing his daily life in my father's home, I held a key to his character, possessed, I verily believe, by none about him; because I was close enough to be allowed unguarded insight into "the very pulse of the machine"; and I recall the incredulity with which my declaration that Jackson was the very stuff out of which to make a stirring hero, was received, before any sword was lifted in the contest.

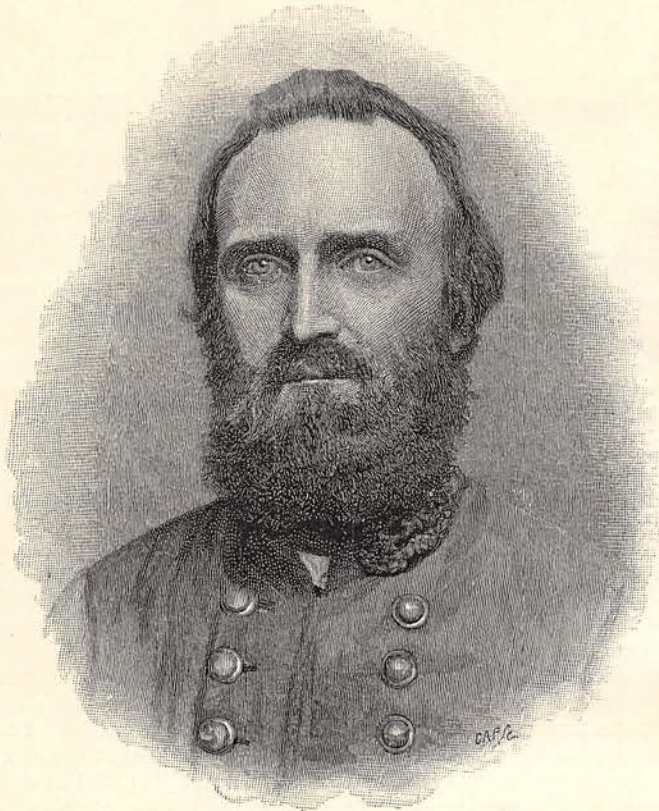
The young soldier was first introduced to our acquaintance as a professor in the Military Institute, at Lexington, Virginia, which Southern people are well pleased to call the West Point of the South. He was of a tall, very erect figure, with a military precision about him which made us girls all account him stiff; but he was one of the most polite and courteous of men. He had a handsome, animated face, flashing blue eyes, and the most mobile of mouths. He was voted eccentric in our little professional society, because he did not walk in the same conventional grooves as other men; it was only when we came to know him with the intimacy of hourly converse that we found that much that passed under the name of eccentricity was the result of the deepest underlying principle, and compelled a respect which we dared not withhold. He was an extremely modest man, and not until he asked

the hand of my sister Elinor in marriage, and the records of his army life were placed before my father (the Rev. Dr. Junkin, President of Washington College, afterwards Washington and Lee University), did we know that he had so distinguished himself in the Mexican war.

Much has been said about the early life of Jackson which has no foundation in truth. He came of English parentage. His father was an engineer, and died before his son's recollection. His uncle, Judge Jackson, of West Virginia, was a man of prominence, and a most kind protector to his nephew. His mother died when he was ten years old; and her saintly death seemed to have made a profound impression upon him. His mother's sister (if my memory serves me aright) married a brother of the wife of President Madison. He was a very delicate child, and at fifteen his physician announced it as his opinion that he would never grow up. But the resolution that afterwards characterized the man came to the boy's aid; and, as he has told me himself, he determined at the age of sixteen that he would not die; and so as a sanitary measure, without asking advice of any one, he sought the position of sheriff of his county, solely with the belief that horseback riding and life in the open air might save him. As a further sanitary measure he determined to seek an appointment as a West Point cadet; not because he had any military ambition, but for the sake of the exercise and drill, which he thought would tend to strengthen him, as they greatly did. In speaking of his West Point life, I asked him once if he was ever guilty of a deliberate infringement of rules. "Yes," he said, "I remember one overt act; but it was the only one in which I consciously did what I knew to be wrong: I stepped behind a tree to conceal myself from an officer, because I was beyond bounds without permit."

After he became an inmate of our household we were not long in discovering that the more rigidly and narrowly his springs of action were scrutinized, the higher arose our respect and reverence. What may have provoked a smile, when the motive or principle that lay behind the act was entirely misapprehended, came to be regarded with a certain admiring wonder when the motive of the act was made clear. We sometimes used to charge him with losing sight of the perspective of things. Not drawing the distinctions that men gen-





LIEUTENANT-GENERAL THOMAS JONATHAN JACKSON.  
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN WINCHESTER, VA., IN 1862; LENT BY MAJOR JED. HOTCHKISS.)

erally do between small and great, he laid as much stress upon truth in the abstract, as involved in the most insignificant words or actions of his daily life, as in the most solemn and important. He weighed his lightest utterances in "the balances of the sanctuary." When it would be playfully represented to him that this needless precision interfered with the minuter graces of conversation, and tended to give angularity or stiffness to his style, his reply would be to the effect that he was perfectly aware of the inelegance it involved, but that he chose to sacrifice all minor charms to the paramount one of absolute truth. For example, talking in my hearing one evening with a friend, some point in the conversation was illustrated by an appeal to a very patent fact in history.

"You remember, Major," said our friend, "that at this period Lord Burleigh was Queen Elizabeth's great counselor——"

"No," was Jackson's interrupting reply, "I don't remember, for I did not know it."

After the friend had gone, we sportively attacked him for having said what he did, remarking that it was no appeal to his knowledge of history, and had no more force than

the "you know," with which Englishmen are accustomed to interlard their conversation.

"That may be," was his reply; "I am quite aware that he did not intend to gauge my knowledge of history; but nothing would have induced me to make the impression upon him that I knew what I did not."

Take another instance. One drizzly March evening we found him about to start, at dusk, for the residence of a friend a mile distant.

"Is it imperative that you go to-night?" he was asked.

"Not specially so," he replied.

"Then why walk a mile in the rain, if to-morrow will do as well?"

As he persisted in going, we pressed to know the wherefore. He was always amiable, and at length confessed his business.

"I was talking with Colonel M—— this morning, and told him that my conversation with Cadet D—— was held in barracks, on Monday. I have since recollected that it was held on the parade-ground, and that it was on Tuesday."

"Does anything depend upon this statement?" he was asked.

"Nothing whatever."



"Don't you suppose Colonel M—— has forgotten all about Cadet D—— before this?"

"I think it very likely, as it was a matter of no moment."

"Why, in the name of reason, then, do you walk a mile in the rain for a perfectly unimportant thing?"

"Simply because I have discovered it was a misstatement, and I could not sleep comfortably to-night, unless I corrected it." And go he did.

Of course it is easy to say that all this was morbid; and so characteristic was it of the man, that I could give scores of similar examples; but this will suffice to show his mettle.

Jackson so "ruled his life," to use one of Havelock's last expressions, that he never, even inadvertently, fell into the use of the common expressions always upon our lips involving the wish that any event or circumstance were different from what it was. To do so would, in his opinion, have been to arraign Providence.

"Don't you wish it might stop raining?" might be the careless remark put to him, after a week of wet weather. His smiling reply would be invariably: "Yes, if the Maker of the weather thinks it best." And yet he never chided others for the use of such expressions, and never found fault with the words or actions of those who wholly differed from him. Never was there a man who imposed upon himself greater abstinence in his expression of judgment of others.

"Hasn't your old army friend Captain C—— some right objectionable habits?"

"C——? Oh, C—— has some fine points of character."

"But it seems to me that he is wanting in fixed principles."

"Indeed? It would give me pain to think so."

"Come, now, Major, I know that you understand Captain C—— thoroughly, and I am sure you must disapprove of him." But nothing could extract a positive expression of disapproval. We used to argue with him that this reticence of judgment did harm; inasmuch as it might be supposed he gave countenance to derelictions about which he would express no opinion. But we never succeeded in winning him to the avowal of adverse judgment, unless there were overt acts which were patent to everybody. Then his denunciations went beyond those of other persons. If a man once deceived him, he never afterwards gave him credit for any truthfulness.

He graduated at West Point just at the beginning of the Mexican war, and he has told me how he burned with enthusiasm to be one of those selected from his class for active service; and that if he had not been so selected,

he should have gone into the war as a volunteer.

There was no portion of his life that he reverted to with more manifest delight than the two years he spent in Mexico. Of the distinction he won in the Mexican war, it is not necessary here to speak; how he was promoted and brevetted on the field for gallant conduct, and how enthusiastic he was as a soldier and a patriot. It is the characteristics of the man we are considering, not the actions of his life.

When he went to Mexico, Jackson did not seem to be governed by any positive religious principle. He had his own ideas of right and wrong, and he followed his clear, true conscience as if its dictates were unerring. His sense of duty was the paramount feeling of his nature; and even at this time he would have died rather than violate it.

Speaking once of the storming of Chepultepec, his battery, if I remember aright, occupied a height which commanded the principal street of the city. Intimation had been given to the inhabitants that the town would be shelled unless surrendered within a given period, in order that the women and children might be removed to a place of safety. The besieged, however, were careless or heedless of this lull in the attack, and the main thoroughfare continued to be filled with the panic-stricken populace. As Jackson stood gazing down upon the swaying multitude, the command was given him to sweep the street with his battery. He opened upon them; and after the clouds of smoke which followed the volley had lifted, he could visibly trace the line of death which his guns had made.

"And had you no compunctions," I asked, with a woman's feeling of horror at the devastation, "as you thought of this multitude being hurried into eternity through your agency?"

"None whatever," was his instantaneous rejoinder. "What business had I with results? *my* duty was to obey orders."

Talking with him once about some subject of casuistry or prevarication, I put the question direct to him, "Did you never tell a lie?" Pausing, as was his invariable manner before giving a categorical answer, as if for an introspective review of his consciousness, he said:

"Yes; but only once, so far as I can remember. I was leading my men through a rank chapparal, infested by Mexican guerrillas. The balls were flying incessantly, and the broad leaves of the tropical plants were being riddled through and through. They became panic-stricken, and, notwithstanding my repeated order for advance, they hung back. Stepping some distance in front of them, into a narrow pass, where the bullets



were whizzing round my head, and the foliage was being cut to ribbons, I called out :

“ Follow me, men ! Don't you see, *there is no danger ?* ”

He was accustomed to revert with words of reverence and gratitude to his superior officer, Colonel T——, who used to invite him to his tent for long conversations. He was the first person who mentioned, in an individual way, the subject of religion to Jackson, and he asked him frankly if he did not think that he ought to give it some consideration. He was finally convinced that it was a reasonable thing for him to do ; and he made up his mind to it, just as he would have made up his mind to undertake some new branch of study.

A singular deliberateness characterized all Jackson's mental movements ; most cautiously did he feel his way to his conclusions, but these conclusions once reached, instantaneous action followed. Consequently, feeling that Colonel T—— was right, and that it was his duty to become a Christian man, he addressed himself to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, as God's onerevelation to man, just as he would have taken up a mathematical problem to work it out. He had less regard for mere authority than any man I ever knew ; and though never troubled by speculative doubts, we used to tell him that he had too daring a confidence in the infallibility of his own convictions. So, in the matter of religion, he determined to test the authority and the agreement of the various existent forms of it with the Scriptures, *de novo*. He would see what the oldest church taught. He went to the archbishop of Mexico, and held long interviews with him as to the dogmas of his church. But the venerable prelate failed to convince this sincere and transparent mind that the tenets of his faith were such as he could accept. But he made it a point to read the Bible and pray, confessing that he did so without one emotional feeling beyond the sense of duty. On his return to the United States, he subjected Episcopacy to the same rigid scrutiny, and, although his severely simple tastes objected to a liturgical form of worship, he connected himself with this church, asking the chaplain, at the post where he was then stationed, to admit him without the ceremony of confirmation, as he was not quite sure that he might not find a church whose simpler forms would suit him better. After coming to Lexington he became a Presbyterian.

It is but just to say here that the rare and finely poised character of his wife had very much to do with the maturing of Jackson's character at the most formative period of his life. Her crystalline truthfulness, her exalted sense of duty, her oneness of aim, were such

as filled him with reverence for her. She used playfully to tell him that Duty was the goddess of his worship. She did not know what truth lay wrapped up in her words. The molding influence which she had over him, in intensifying and giving bent to his character, was a fitting crown to her short and beautiful life.

A long journey taken with him and a family party, after his marriage, brought to the surface many of the idiosyncrasies of this unique type of manhood. We were one day crossing the boiling torrent, just between the American and Canadian Falls, at Niagara, in a slight boat manned by two stout oarsmen. The little steamer, the *Maid of the Mist*, was there, but for some reason or other we chose to cross in the open boat. Mid-stream, the current so swirled around us that I became terrified and believed we were going to the bottom. Jackson pinioned me down with his strong arms, and, turning to one of the men, said, “ How often have you crossed here ? ”

“ I have been rowing people across, sir, for twelve years.”

“ Did you ever meet with an accident ? ”

“ Never, sir.”

“ Never were capsized ? Never lost a life ? ”

“ Nothing of the kind, sir ! ”

Then, turning with a somewhat peremptory voice to me, he said :

“ You hear what the boatman says ; and unless you think you can take the oars and row better than he does, sit still and trust him as I do.”

It was curious to see, at this time, to what odd conclusions such a conscientious man as he could come when arguing from insufficient data. Every one who knew anything about him during the war knows what a purist he was in regard to Sunday observance ; it came to be almost a matter of amusement in the army that “ Old Jack ” tried to keep Sunday as if he were in his peaceful, church-going home. But this period of which I speak was before the opening of the war. Being in Montreal one Sunday, it was a matter of surprise to the rest of us, knowing how straitlaced he was in many particulars, to find him going out on Sunday evening, to witness the drill of a Highland regiment. When the matter was reverted to by some of our party, he defended himself stoutly for having done so, giving as a reason the principle on which he always acted, namely : that if anything was right and good in itself, and circumstances were such that he could not avail himself of it any time but Sunday, it was not wrong for him to do so, inasmuch as it thus became a matter of necessity. It was argued that this was a very sophistical way of secularizing



sacred time, and many instances were given, showing to what such a line of argument might lead. As there was no stubbornness in his nature, which was one surprisingly open to conviction, he said, on this occasion, "It is possible that my premises are wrong; when I get home I will carefully go over all this ground, and reach my own conclusions." Yet, as he had not reached his conclusions then, he had no hesitation in spending all Sunday afternoon in hilarious conversation with some old army friends, whom he accidentally encountered, and justifying himself by avowing that it was all right, because they were to leave on the morrow, and this was his only chance of renewing the old barracks reminiscences. When he returned home he took up this Sunday question, gave it a most thorough investigation, and laid down a law for himself of the utmost severity, from which he never afterwards swerved.

He never posted a letter without calculating whether it would have to travel on Sunday to reach its place of destination, and if so, he would not mail it till Monday morning. Still further did he carry his Puritanical observance. Unnumbered times have I known him to receive important letters so late on Saturday night that he would not break his fixed resolution never to use his eyes, which were very delicate, by artificial light; he would carry the letters in his pocket till Monday morning, then rise with the sun to read them.

We were not in the habit of sparing his peculiarities in the least, and perhaps rather mercilessly twitted him at times, but he was never offended, nor was his equanimity disturbed by it in the least. Frequently in walking to church with him, with the knowledge that he had these letters on his person, I would teasingly affirm that he was practicing a piece of asceticism, which was flattering to self-pride, ending by telling him that they served in reality as a mild sort of hair shirt. But I never succeeded in getting him to break the seals on Sunday. He owned, at one time, a considerable amount of stock in a Northern railroad, which did as much business on the first day of the week as any. As soon as he discovered this he sold out all his shares, and took stock from another company whose dividends were far inferior, because they did not indulge in this amount of Sunday traffic.

As he was about starting for Europe, we amused ourselves over his scruples, by asking him if he had found a captain who would stop his steamer on Sunday; but he very easily parried our questions with the "necessity" answer. But let it here be clearly understood that Jackson never forced his convictions upon others, and never offered his rule of life

as a guide for others. He acted his religion; he never spoke of it to others; for on this point he was one of the most reticent of human beings, save to the very few who shared the privacy of his inmost life.

So many illustrations that bear upon this much-commented-on characteristic of Jackson's, about Sunday observance, occur to my mind, that I cannot forbear going a little aside from my own personal recollections, and giving an incident or two.

Before any hostilities had commenced, Jackson was ordered to Harper's Ferry, where military bands were gathering from all quarters, that he might drill this crude material, and get ready for action. The daily drill was constant and severe; and when Sunday came, these men of peace, who had never carried muskets before, would fain have had it intermitted. An officer of high standing came to a brother of mine, and begged him to use his influence with Jackson to shorten the drill on Sunday. The wish was backed by many officers, and accordingly on Saturday night it was made known to Jackson; he received the intimation quietly, but made no promise. The next morning, at an hour even earlier than usual, Jackson himself, bedight in full regimentals, and with more military precision than he had before thought it necessary to assume, appeared on the ground, and superintended the drill himself, making it longer, sterner, and much more rigid than it hitherto had been.

In the winter of '61-'62, while Jackson's forces were at Winchester, he sent a brigade to destroy the canal leading to Washington. The expedition proved a failure; and he attributed it, in some measure, to the fact that Sunday had been needlessly trespassed upon. So when a second expedition was planned he determined there should be no Sabbath-breaking connected with it, that he could prevent. The advance was to be made early on Monday morning. On Saturday he ordered my husband (Colonel Preston, at that time on his staff) to see that the necessary powder was in readiness. The quarter-master could not find a sufficient quantity in Winchester on Saturday, but during Sunday it was procured. On Sunday evening the fact in some way got to Jackson's ears. At a very early hour on Monday, he dispatched an officer to Shepherdstown for other powder, which was brought. Then summoning Colonel Preston, he said very decisively:

"Colonel, I desire that you will see that the powder which is used for this expedition is *not the powder that was procured on Sunday.*"

It was on the long journey to Canada of which I have spoken, that the military enthusiasm of



Jackson's character first revealed itself to me. My sister and myself stood with him, one magnificent August evening, on the Plains of Abraham, at the foot of the monument erected to General Wolfe. As he approached the monument he took off his cap, as if he were in the presence of some sacred shrine. I never shall forget the dilating enthusiasm that seemed to take possession of the whole man; he stood a-tiptoe, his tall figure appearing much taller than usual, under the overpowering feeling of the moment; his clear blue eye flashing with such a fiery light as it used to wear on many an after battle-field; his thin, sensitive nostrils quivering with emotion, and his lips parting with a rush of excited utterance, as he turned his face towards the setting sun, swept his arm with a passionate movement around the plain, and exclaimed, quoting Wolfe's dying words—"I die content!" To die as *he* died, who would not die content!"

What a revelation it would have been, could he have known, then and there, that in a very few more years, moved by as pure a patriotism, on a broader field of fame, and with a world-wide glory, before which Wolfe's pales into insignificance, he *should* "die content!"

His habits of study were very peculiar; but then, what was there that was not peculiar about this exceptional type of humanity? Nothing but absolute illness ever caused him to relax his rigid system of rules; he would rise in the midst of the most animated conversation, like the very slave of the clock, as soon as his hour had struck, and go to his study. He would run superficially over large portions of French mathematical works during the day, and then at night, with his green silk shade over his eyes which never had been strong, and standing at his upright desk, on which always a light burned, with neither book nor paper before him, he would spend hours in digesting mentally what he had taken during the afternoon in a mere mechanical way. His power of concentration was very great, and he was able to abstract himself wholly from whatsoever was extraneous to the subject in hand.

When he accepted the appointment of professor at the Military Institute at Lexington, his health was in a most enfeebled condition; he was a martyr to aggravated dyspepsia, and he could scarcely use his eyes at all. I once asked him, chaffingly, if it was not a little bit of presumption to accept the appointment when he was so incapacitated physically for filling it.

"Not in the least," was his answer; "the appointment came unsought, and was therefore providential; and I knew that if Providence set me a task, he would give me the

power to perform it. So I resolved to get well, and you see I have. As to the rest, I knew that what I *willed* to do, I *could* do."

This confidence was very characteristic of him. He once said, "I expect fully one day to be able to speak Latin." When doubt was expressed, on account of his ignorance of the language (Latin not being taught at the Military Academy), he added, "I have absolute faith in the omnipotence of the will to accomplish whatever is within the range of possibility; and if I resolve to do it, you'll see if I don't outstrip you all!"

There was significancy in the remark of one of his West Point friends, who in meeting another, and inquiring after old classmates, mentioned Jackson, and asked what he was doing.

"The last time I heard of him he was trying to learn to play on the violin," was the reply.

"What! Jackson? Why, he had not an iota of music in his composition. Nevertheless, one thing is certain—if he *resolves* to play, he may be a Paganini yet!"

After the death of my sister it became the established custom that at nine o'clock, unless otherwise occupied, I should go to his study for an hour or two of relaxation and chat; but if the knock came before the clock had struck, I would find him standing before his shaded light, with his eyes shut, as silent and as dumb as the sphinx; not one moment before the ninth stroke had died away would he fling aside his shade, wheel round his easy-chair, and give himself up to the most delightful nonchalance, that made one question whether this could be the same man that a moment before seemed to have neither motion, sight, nor hearing. In such intercourse I came to know the man as never before. His early life, his lonely orphanage, his struggle with disease, his West Point life, his campaigning in Mexico, his two years' residence in the city of Mexico, which was to him so full of delight, his service among the Everglades in Florida, his life at various posts up to the time of his coming to reside among us,—all these furnished material for endless reminiscence. The blow of his wife's death was a terrible one to him; and when I would hear him say, as he sometimes did, on the occasion of slight illnesses, "Ah, if it only might please God to let me go now!" I marveled at the depth of his grief; and yet his resignation was very perfect, and to wear the aspect of cheerfulness became a fixed principle.

It would not be easy to convince those who knew Jackson only as a stern military man, and the genius of fiery battle-fields, that his nature had a sportive, rollicking side. He



would tell amusing stories, and be so carried away by them himself, as almost to roll from his chair in laughter. More contagious and hearty laughter I have never heard. He used to tell of hungry raids upon Mexican gardens, where he and his brother officers would make their supper on raw quinces; of his ascent of Orizaba—going so high that the rarefied atmosphere forced the blood from his ears and nostrils; of his gay, delightful life in the city of Mexico, where, after all hostilities were over, the American officers were received into the homes of the old *noblesse*, who boasted of their pure Castilian blood, with entire oblivion of them as their conquerors. He was very fond of dancing at this time, and he had no hesitation in being constantly present at Sunday-night balls. When surprise would be expressed at this, he would say, "Remember, I lived, then, up to all the light I had, and therefore I did not then, nor do I now, reproach myself."

He was quartered in the old palace of the Montezumas; and it was very evident that the charms of society never had so strong a hold upon him as when he was mingling freely with those beautiful Mexican women. To make intercourse at all easy, it was necessary to speak Spanish. He resolved to do so; but not a grammar of the language could be found in the city, save Latin ones. But this in no way deterred him; in an incredibly short time he mastered Spanish so thoroughly that he spoke it as long as he lived more volubly and gracefully than he did his vernacular. Indeed, between himself and his wife this language became the main vehicle of communication. With some families of note there, he formed warm friendships which he maintained to the close of his life; and the silver stilettos and knives and memorials of various kinds, with which they loaded him on his departure, were always regarded as among his treasures.

He did not intuitively, as it were, take in knowledge, but his mind never lost a fact or idea once committed to its keeping. His acquaintance with general literature was not extensive, as his studies had been principally of a scientific and military character. If, as Carlyle says, "Genius is the capacity for infinite painstaking" (which is anything but a good definition of genius), then Jackson possessed it; for there was no limit to the pains he would take to verify everything that came before him. Whilst he was very docile, and ready to be instructed by those whom he considered wiser than himself, it was yet curious to see how little he regarded the authority of great names. He would still persist in working out his own conclusions, and establishing facts for himself.

Toleration was one of his most marked characteristics, and he would even allow a latitude of opinion in others, that seemed at times inconsistent on the part of one who was so sternly fixed in his own.

Jackson's personal habits were systematic in the extreme. His delicacy of constitution required great care in order to maintain equable health. He studied his physical nature with a physician's scrutiny; and having once adopted a regimen which he believed perfectly suited to himself, nothing would ever tempt him to swerve in the slightest degree from it. If in traveling he could not command at all times the exact kind of food that suited him, he would fast rather than satisfy appetite on what did not suit him. He ate, as he did everything else, from a sense of duty; and when sometimes at parties and receptions we would entreat him, for courtesy's sake and the gratification of his hostess, to seem to accept some delicacy, or at least venture upon a grape or orange, he would always reply, "No, no, I have no genius for *seeming*." He was very fond of quoting the experience of Louis Cornaro, the old Italian apostle of hygiene, whose sanitary regulations he highly approved, and would say often that he would not be surprised if, like Cornaro, he lived to be very old.

His nervous organism was of a singularly sensitive character, and he had an incredible natural impatience of, and shrinking from pain. His revulsion at scenes of horror, or even descriptions of them, was almost inconsistent in one who had lived the life of a soldier. He has told me that his first sight of a mangled and swollen corpse on a Mexican battle-field, as he rode over the morning after the conflict, filled him with as much sickening dismay as if he had been a woman. He was once suffering with an attack of neuralgia in the face, of no remarkable severity as it seemed to a looker-on, but he turned with a look of agonizing impatience, and said vehemently, "M——, I could easier die than bear this for three days!"

Only in the innermost circle of home did any one come to know what Jackson really was. With people who fully understood him he would be sportive and rollicking, and full of quips and pranks. His natural temperament was extremely buoyant, and his cheerfulness and *abandon* were beautiful to see, provided there were only one or two people to see it. He was exceedingly fond of little children, and he would roll with them over the carpet, play them all manner of tricks, and amuse them endlessly with his Spanish baby talk.

As may be supposed, punctuality was one of Jackson's most marked characteristics;



no one could ever charge him with loss of time through dilatoriness on his part. He never failed to fill an engagement; or if it was impossible to do so, he would take any amount of trouble to give notice beforehand of his inability to keep it. He was rigid as to the hours of his meals, and when I would remind him, if dinner was five minutes late, that cooks were human, he was accustomed to say, "I don't mind the five minutes delay beyond time; but I do beg that you will not let me know of it." I was once with him in Washington City, when the friends with whom we were staying joined their entreaties to ours for another day, on which to carry out their plans for an excursion, but that would have entailed his reporting for duty at the barracks in the evening instead of the morning, as was the order. He could not be induced to remain, although urgent that we ladies should. When we reached Lexington, and he hastened next morning to report, there was not a superior officer on the ground, and the corps of cadets was absent for a week's encampment, at the White Sulphur Springs. Thinking that he would regret not having yielded to our wishes, and remained in Washington, we chaffed him a little on his needless haste, and asked if he did not regret it.

"Regret it? Not I! If a letter had reached me informing me of this absence before I left Washington, I would have come on, all the same, unless the letter had been from the colonel, lengthening my furlough; my duty is to be here; with changes of plans for the corps I have nothing to do."

On the occasion of his visit to Europe, greatly to our surprise, he overstaid his furlough a fortnight. On his arrival we looked for some expression of regret or manifestation of chagrin, but there was not the slightest.

"I did all that lay in the compass of human power and foresight to be here at the appointed time," he said, "but when those over whom I had no control occasioned the delay, my responsibility was at an end."

His summer in Europe was full of enjoyment and profit. And, strange to say, he did not turn aside to visit battle-fields or to witness any military movements, but found more pleasure in the famed galleries of art and in the grand remains of ancient architecture than perhaps in anything else. Although he had no knowledge of art whatever, he had an undeveloped love for it. When he was stationed at Fort Hamilton, he used to say that he never came to New York city without finding time to step into one of the best galleries accessible. I saw him once take a lowly attitude in a Roman Catholic church before a fine painting of the Crucifixion. Any one

who could have seen his reverent and riveted gaze and his earnest enthusiasm, might well have believed him a true son of the church or a devotee of sacred art.

Another phase of this original character, which differed in so many essential points from that of ordinary types, was his somewhat morbid fear that he should fail in giving due credit to others for all that was good in them. It has been the habit, even among his own people, to represent him as grim and severe. As it is only the characteristics of the man we are considering, not his peculiarities as a soldier or a great military leader, we deny the assertion. Pitilessly stern he was towards himself, as we have seen; but too forbearing did we often find him towards others. He came one day with an anxious look upon his face to one of my brothers, and asked him to turn to those passages of St. Paul, "Let each esteem other better than themselves"—"in honor preferring one another." He asked that it should be critically read to him in the Greek. After a full explanation was given he looked up with a bright air, and with a humility always touching in him, and said, "I am so thankful to have a better understanding of these texts; I have been feeling that I may have been very wrong in elevating myself in my own mind above certain friends of mine."

The name of fanatic will probably stick to Jackson; and he will continue to be classed with such men as Peter the Hermit, and Loyola, and Cromwell, to the end of the chapter. But a fanatic, a visionary, an enthusiast, he was not, in any such sense as were those men. His fanaticism consisted in the intensity of his own religious convictions, which, contrary to the wont of all fanatics, he never thrust upon others; the fact is, he maintained a degree of reticence in alluding to the matter of personal religious faith and practice that many Christian men might find fault with; and, as has been said more than once in the course of these disjointed reminiscences, it was only by dint of urgency that the inmost springs of action were often discovered. In all the intimacy of our close home-life, I do not recall that he ever volunteered any expression of what is called "religious experience." The habit so often noticed by his soldiers on the battle-field, of momentarily raising his hand, as if in prayer, seems perfectly natural to one who knew how he construed Scripture commands. St. Paul's term, "instant in prayer," being used by him one day, his sense of its meaning was required.

"I can give you," he said, "my idea of it by illustration, if you will allow it, and will not think that I am setting myself up as a model for



others." On assurance being given that there would be no misjudgment, he went on to say, "I have so fixed the habit in my own mind, that I never raise a glass of water to my lips without a moment's asking of God's blessing. I never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal. I never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts heavenward. I never change my classes in the Section room without a minute's petition on the cadets who go out and those who come in."

"And don't you sometimes forget to do this?"

"I think I scarcely can say that I do; the habit has become as fixed almost as breathing."

He used to express surprise sometimes at the want of equanimity on the part of Christians, under the pressure of untoward circumstances; and he remarked, in connection, that he did not think that any combination of earthly ills could make him positively unhappy, if he believed he was suffering the will of God. As this seemed a bold assertion, and I knew from observation that his nervous organization made him shrink rather strangely from pain, a test was proposed: "Suppose that these unprofitable eyes of yours, that give you so much trouble, should become suddenly blind, do you believe your serenity would remain unclouded?"

He paused a moment, as if to weigh fully the exact measure of every word he uttered, and then said, "I am sure of it; even such a misfortune could not make me doubt the love of God."

Still further to test him it was urged: "Conceive, then, that besides your hopeless blindness, you were condemned to be bedridden and racked with pain for life: you would hardly call yourself happy then."

There was again the same deliberateness before he replied: "Yes, I think I could; my faith in the Almighty wisdom is absolute, and why should this accident change it?"

Touching him upon a tender point,—his impatience of anything bordering on every species of dependence,—the test was pushed further: "But if, in addition to blindness and incurable infirmity and pain, you had to receive grudging charity from those on whom you had no claim,—what then?"

There was a strange reverence in his lifted eye, and an exalted expression over his whole face, as he replied with slow deliberateness, "If it was God's will, *I think I could lie there content a hundred years!*"

As an instance of the alacrity with which if once convinced that a thing was right to do, he did it, take the following: Speaking of self-abnegation on one occasion, and his

making rather light of it, it was suggested that he had not been called to endure it.

"Imagine, now, that the providence of God seemed to direct you to drop every scheme of life, and of personal advancement, and go on a mission to the heart of Africa, for the rest of your days, could you go without demur?"

I remember how his eye flashed, as he instantly replied: "I could go *without my hat!*"

It is often urged that Jackson was possessed with boundless military ambition. This is not the impression he made upon those who knew him in the privacy of domestic life. He had some odd ambitions; military glory was not one of them. At the period of life of which I write, not long before the opening of the war, he used to express aversion to some of the aspects of a soldier's career: its nomadic character; its want of domesticity; its stagnation in times of peace, and its interference with the ordered routine of religious life. He dissuaded a brother-in-law from entering upon it, for these given reasons. One of the curious ambitions alluded to was his desire to prepare some college text-books of a mathematical kind, that should be better than those he could command. He certainly had no special fitness for this kind of work, and many were the arguments used to dissuade him from the attempt.

As I look over the letters received from him on the battle-field, I find in none of them any allusion to or any thirst for military fame. To serve his country, to do God's will, to make as short work as possible of the fearful struggle, to be ready for death if at any moment it should come to him,—these were the uppermost ideas in his mind; and he would put aside, with an impatient expression, the words of confidence and praise that would be lavished upon him. "Give God the glory" would be his curt reply. Receiving on one occasion a letter from him, just when the struggle was at its hottest and his brilliant movements were the astonishment and admiration of the whole country, what was my surprise to find not an allusion to what he had done, not a word about the great victory, not a hint of the forced marches and of the tragic scenes about him. An old servant who belonged to him, and for whom he had a most tender regard, had just died, and it was of this "dear old Amy," as he called her, that the victor, whose name was on every lip, sat down in his tent and wrote. Perhaps this may be said to be one of the instances in which Jackson lost sight of the true perspective of life.

Jackson's interest in the negro race was very great, not because they were slaves, but be-



cause they were human beings with souls to be saved. He accepted slavery as it existed in the Southern States, not as a thing desirable in itself, but as allowed by Providence for ends which it was not his business to determine. Commiserating the ignorance of the race, he established, by much personal effort and under some obloquy, a Sunday school for them in Lexington, which he kept up with assiduous diligence till the breaking out of the war. This school has been maintained in successful operation to the present day.

Jackson was not a Secessionist, but a very firm State's Rights man. My personal knowledge leads me to assert that he entered the war not to uphold slavery, but to defend his native state, to which he was enthusiastically loyal. He was from principle, by education, and by previous military service in the United States army, a true lover of his whole country; but he felt that his paramount allegiance was due to his own state; and when she declared war, he did not hesitate to obey her call. In this connection I feel warranted in saying that no feeling of hatred toward his opponents had place in his bosom. He did justice to their motives, as became the feeling and instincts of a soldier; and he never allowed himself any virulence of speech toward them,—never even using the expression "Yankees," but always speaking of them as "Federals."

There were some amusing sides to Jackson's character, arising from his utter indifference to ridicule, if what provoked it involved the faintest principle by which he guided his life.

Being a grievous dyspeptic, as has been said, he had the dyspeptic's failing of nodding sometimes when he ought to be wide awake. This used to beset him sorely in church, where he always maintained the habit of sitting in a perfectly upright position, disdaining to lean against the back of the pew. The consequence was that his propensity to nod was made the more conspicuous. I would urge upon him the propriety of leaning back so as to avoid giving occasion to the cadets in the gallery opposite for laughter; but never was the plea successful, nor could he be persuaded to nod in any way but in a bolt-upright posture. Pinches upon the elbow never offended him,

nor was a shawl-pin always effective. "I will do nothing to superinduce sleep," he would say, "by putting myself at ease, or making myself more comfortable; but if in spite of my resistance I yield to my infirmity, then I accept as punishment the mortification I feel, because I deserve it."

The only endeavor in these personal reminiscences has been to throw together such incidents as have an illustrative bearing upon the unique character of a man who certainly was a variation from the ordinary type. No attempt has been made to portray him as the successful soldier, the great commander, the strenuous disciplinarian, the tireless leader who never spared the muscles of his men who, notwithstanding, adored and trusted him throughout all; and who was to the end the popular idol of the Southern heart. The records of this man's actions before the world are chronicled on every side. It is the inner spring of those actions only with which we have had to do. Thoroughly to understand the man, it is necessary that the motive power that controlled his whole being should be rightly comprehended; this is the one key to the intricate wards of a nature that to the mere ordinary observer has seemed somewhat contradictory.

The translation of the underlying principles which these reminiscences have attempted in some degree to set forth, into action on the fiery battle-field, in the sweeping march, in the devastating onset, and in the life of the camp, may serve as a clew to those who only know Stonewall Jackson as a remarkable military leader, for whom the men that followed him seemed always ready to lay down their lives. His salient points, so seized on as to become the theme of undue exaggeration, need to be estimated, not as eccentricities of which he himself was unaware, but as the deliberate and lofty principles of his life.

It may be well, therefore, to make an attempt to preserve such minute threads of ascertained facts as these pages of illustration set forth, in regard to one of the most noteworthy figures of the age. For it is out of just such material as this that the loom of history seeks to weave its indestructible web.

*Margaret J. Preston.*

