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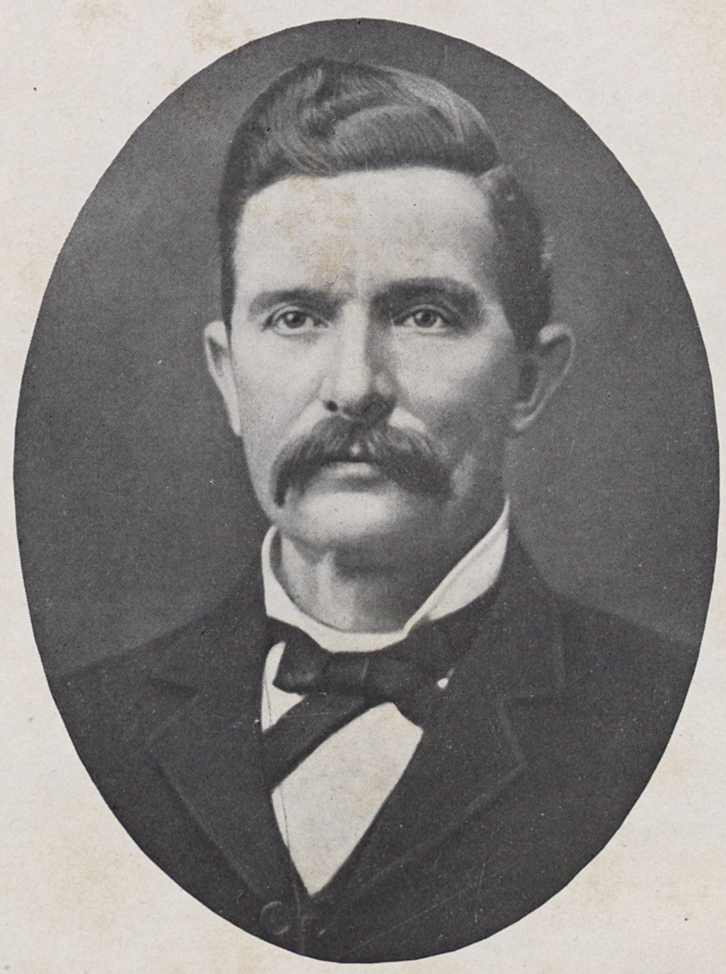
LEROY LEE SMITH

A LAWYER OF THE OLD SCHOOL

MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER

Minnie Walker Knight



LEROY LEE SMITH

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A LAWYER OF THE OLD SCHOOL

BY

MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER, M. A.

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TO HIS DAUGHTERS:
EPIA DUNCAN, ELIZA NORFLEET,
AND MAY EDLA

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PREFATORY NOTE

That the delicate feelings, fine sentiments, and lofty purposes cherished; the professional fidelity, political sincerity, and religious devotion displayed; and loyalty to the ancient order, affection for home, and love of unsullied soul, so characteristic of Leroy Lee Smith, may not perish utterly, this little volume is written.

The "Lawyer of the Old School" is intended primarily for members of his family and for his personal and professional friends. This consideration has contributed to the form and the content of this memorial volume of one too inherently modest to parade his virtues. But so long as men put a premium on integrity of life and strive to face the future unafraid, so long will such records, though brief, be not wholly useless.

M. T. P.

WILMINGTON, N. C., October, 1916.

I

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

"The Albemarle Country, considered in any aspect, is full of historic interest. It was not only here, on Roanoke Island, that the first settlement was made, and the first child was born of English-speaking parents on the American continent, but it was here also 'in our county of Albemarle,' in 1668, that, in the petition from the 'Grand Assembly praying that the inhabitants of the said county may hold their lands upon the same terms and conditions that the inhabitants of Virginia hold theirs,' was seen and felt one of the first impulses of that spirit of liberty and of patriotism that developed in the colonies and finally culminated in the American revolution.

"The beautiful name Albemarle came to us across the waters from the Old World. *Albermarla* of the Middle Ages became the French *Aumale* and the English Albemarle. It was first a countship of France formed by William the Conqueror in the year 1070; and after the passing of centuries it was made a duchy.

"After the Restoration, Charles II. granted Carolina to some of his personal friends and

courtiers, in payment of political debts, and the grant of Charles I. to Sir Robert Heath, by royal decree, became a nullity. Among the grantees of Charles II.—the original Lords Proprietors—was General George Monk. He had entered London at the head of an army of 50,000 men clad in the uniform of Cromwell's Ironsides, and, without disclosing his purpose, restored the monarchy and placed Charles on the throne; and he, in turn, was created the First Duke of Albemarle. That name, in his honor, was first given to our broad waters. Chowan River, by Indian nomenclature, extended perhaps to Roanoke Inlet; and that part of it now known as the sound was called by the early settlers Carolina River; but the Lords Proprietors named it Albemarle River, and afterwards Albemarle Sound, as it is known today.

"In the meantime the genial climate and the fertile soil had already begun to attract settlers from Virginia, and adventurers from other quarters, to the lands lying north of the Sound, and in 1656 the first permanent settlement was made; and in October, 1664, the Lords Proprietors formed Albemarle County and appointed William Drummond governor. It was soon afterwards discovered that the settlements made

and the county formed on the north of the Sound were not entirely embraced in their grant, and the Lords Proprietors hastened to the king for an extension of the grant for about thirty miles northward, and on June 30, 1665, the king issued another grant or charter extending Carolina to 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, and that has ever since been the proper dividing line between Carolina and Virginia. But it was for a long time a bone of contention, and it required several surveys to locate the line.

"The county of Albemarle was first divided into four precincts—Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Currituck—and afterwards Bertie and Tyrrell were added."*

The Colonial and State Records, and the compilations of historians gathered from various sources, give a fairly full account of the political and military history of the Albemarle Section of North Carolina; but little, however, is told us of the social and industrial and religious life. How the people lived, and the sources contributing to their well-being, did not interest the historians of the past so much as did the exploits of some military captain or the doings of some civil officer. Only incidentally can we

*"Methodism in the Albemarle Country," by L. L. Smith.

gather glimpses of the people in those early times.

George Fox, coming into Carolina from Virginia in 1672, gives some intimations of conditions in the Albemarle Country. His Journal runs thus:

"After this our way to Carolina grew worse, being much of it plashy, and pretty full of great bogs and swamps; so that we were commonly wet to the knees, and lay abroad at night in the woods by a fire.

"One night we got to a poor house at Sommertown,[1] and lay by the fire. The woman of the house had a sense of God upon her. The report of our travel had reached thither, and drawn some that lived beyond Sommertown to that house, in expectation to see and hear us (so acceptable was the sound of Truth in that wilderness country); but they missed us.

"The next day, the 21st of the Ninth month, having traveled hard through the woods and over many bogs and swamps, we reached Bonner's Creek;[2] and there we lay that night by the fireside, the woman lending us a mat to lie on.

[1]Somerton, Va.
[2]Bennett's Creek, N. C.

"This was the first house we came to in Carolina. Here we left our horses, overwearied with travel. Thence we went down the creek in a canoe, to Macocomocock River, and came to Hugh Smith's house, where the people of other professions came to see us (for there were no Friends in that part of the country), and many of them received us gladly.

"Not far from here we had a meeting among the people, and they were taken with the Truth; blessed be the Lord! Then, passing down the river Maratick in a canoe, we went down the bay Coney-Hoe, and came to the house of a captain, who was very loving, and lent us his boat, for we were much wet in the canoe, the water splashing in upon us. With this boat we went to the Governor's house; but the water in some places was so shallow that the boat, being laden, could not swim; so we were fain to put off our shoes and stockings and wade through the water some distance.

"The Governor, with his wife, received us lovingly; but a doctor there would dispute with us. And truly his opposing us was of good service, giving occasion for the opening of many things to the people concerning the Light and Spirit of God, which he denied to be in every one, and affirmed that it was not in the Indians.

"Whereupon I called an Indian to us and asked him whether when he lied, or did wrong to any one, there was not something in him that reproved him for it. He said there was such a thing in him that did so reprove him, and he was ashamed when he had done wrong, or spoken wrong. So we shamed the doctor before the Governor and the people, insomuch the poor man ran out so far that at length he would not own the Scriptures.

"We tarried at the Governor's that night; and next morning he very courteously walked with us himself about two miles through the woods, to a place whither he had sent our boat about to meet us. Taking leave of him, we entered our boat, and went that day about thirty miles to the house of Joseph Scott, one of the representatives of our county.

"There we had a sound, precious meeting; the people were tender, and much desired after meetings. At a house about four miles further we had another meeting, to which came the Governor's secretary, who was chief secretary of the province, and had been formerly convinced.

"Having visited the north part of Carolina, and made a little entrance for Truth upon the people there, we began to return towards Virginia, having several meetings in our way, wherein we had very good service for the Lord, the people being generally tender and open; blessed be the Lord!

"We lay one night at the house of the secretary, to get to which gave us much trouble, for, the water being shallow, we could not bring our boat to shore; but the secretary's wife, seeing our strait, came herself in a canoe (her husband being from home) and brought us to land.

"Upon our return we had a very precious meeting at Hugh Smith's; praised be the Lord forever! The people were very tender, and very good service we had amongst them. There was at this meeting an Indian captain who was very loving, and acknowledged it to be Truth that was spoken. There was also one of the Indian priests, whom they called a Pawaw, who sat soberly among the people.

"The 9th of the Tenth month we got back to Bonner's Creek, where we had left our horses, having spent about eighteen days in the north of Carolina.

"Our horses having rested, we set forward for Virginia again, traveling through the woods and bogs as far as we could reach that day, and at night lying by a fire in the woods. Next day we had a tedious journey through bogs and

swamps; and were exceedingly wet and dirty all the day, but dried ourselves at night by the fire.

"We got that night to Sommertown. As we came near, the woman of the house, seeing us, spoke to her son to keep up their dogs; for both in Virginia and Carolina (living lonely in the woods) they generally keep great dogs to guard their houses."

This was the Albemarle Country two hundred and fifty years ago. A kindly disposed, open-hearted, and religiously inclined people, on friendly terms with the Indians, isolated and subjected to the crude and hard conditions of the primeval wilderness, did Fox find.

More than a hundred years later the Methodist pioneers pressed their way through this same land in which the first gospel sermon preached in North Carolina was delivered by Edmondson, another Friend, who preceded George Fox a few months. The Methodists met a people unlike and yet like those found by the Quakers. On Wednesday, December 18, 1782, Jesse Lee makes this entry in his Journal:

"E. Dromgoole preached at Yoepim Church to a large congregation of attentive hearers. We then rode home with the Reverend Mr. Pettigrew, near Edenton, and spent the night with him. Our journey in the lowlands from Edenton to Norfolk County in Virginia, and back again, has taken sixteen days, in which time we have had nineteen meetings, chiefly among people who were not acquainted with the Methodists; but the general wish was that we should return again; and we so far succeeded in our plan as to form a circuit, which was called Camden. I felt thankful to God for the privilege of visiting that strange people, and I had no doubt but our labors were acceptable to God and profitable to the people."

Two years later Francis Asbury, in one of his pilgrimages, passing through this section, makes characteristic comments: "On Sunday, January 21st, preached to about five hundred people at Coinjock Chapel; on Tuesday at Winfield Courthouse to about six or seven hundred, inattentive and wild enough." He observes that "spirituous liquor is and will be a curse to this people." "Set out in the rain to Hartford town. I spoke in a tavern; the people seem wild and wicked altogether. I journeyed on through the damp weather, and reached Pettigrew's about 6 o'clock. . . . I preached in Edenton to a gay, inattentive people."

But there is another side to the picture. The wild and the wicked, the gay and the inattentive are not all. In 1801 Asbury makes this entry in his Journal: "We came to Knotty Pine to the house of mourning for a favorite son. Marmaduke Baker was this day to have

gone to Princeton College to finish his education. We hope he has gone to the college of saints and the society of heaven."

No doubt the "Prophet of the Long Road" often enjoyed the hospitality of this cultured Christian home; a letter to him from Mrs. Baker dated "North Carolina, Gates County, Knotty Pine Chapel, March 17, 1799," begins as follows: "When you were with me last you desired that I would give you an account of the dear saints who are fallen asleep in Jesus in this place. I will give you a list of their names, with a sketch of some of their characters." She then named twenty, giving a short sketch of each, and how they died, and closed as follows: "I hope the Lord will renew your health and strength, that you may live long to water His vineyard. Pray for me that I may be more holy and heavenly minded. Give my love to Brother Lee. Mr. Baker and the children join me in sincere love to you. Your affectionate sister, I. BAKER."

Here is piety, culture, and education in a home six miles north of Gatesville, the county-seat, in a county in which the Census of 1790 gives the number of "heads of families" as six hundred and twenty-four (624). Of these, three hundred and forty-three (343) own slaves.

The number of slaves to a family range from one to thirty-six. Sixty years later, the white and the slave population is nearly equal.

The foregoing facts and implications would indicate the existence of a rural aristocracy, paternal in its organization, sympathetic in its relationship, and conservative in all things. Naturally, a people rooted to the soil, nourished by the soil, and independent because of the fruitful fields which placed them above the fluctuations of the markets, would hold fast to the existing order. Then, too, the almost filial feeling that grew up between master and servant through the generations, with little migration of the whites and few transportations of the blacks, made for mutual sympathy and good-will. These were literally the conditions that obtained in Gates County in the days prior to the Civil War. Moreover, many of the customs, traditons, and habits, a genuine outgrowth of the past—a past going back to the early days of the Albemarle—continue to the present time.

Leroy Lee Smith was so genuinely a product of his people and his times, and lived so intimately with the traditions of the past and the spirit of the present, that all these must be reckoned with in any estimate of his life.

II

ANCESTRY AND BOYHOOD DAYS

Leroy Lee Smith was born February 8, 1847, on a farm six miles from Gatesville, North Carolina, and twelve miles from Somerton, Virginia. Neither of these places ever gained importance commercially, but they assumed large proportions in the life of the boy and later of the man. Gatesville went back to the times of the Revolution, getting its name from General Gates, before his star had waned, and Somerton began with the early settlements of Virginia. About these community centers in the midst of a large rural section clustered the life of his people. The traditions of his family gathered around Somerton, and his later life centered at Gatesville. The one recalled the past; the other filled full the present.

This branch of the Smith family came into Nansemond County, Virginia, from the "Peninsula." Richard Smith and Mary Cross grew up in Nansemond and married, 1798. Of this union were born Edwin Smith; Ann Smith (called Nancy); Jethro Smith, who died at twenty-five years of age; Allen Smith; Sallie

Smith, who married Justin Rawls; and Martha Smith (called Patsie).

Richard Smith died comparatively young, leaving the responsibilities of the family and of the farm upon his wife, Mary Cross Smith. The wisdom and business judgment shown in rearing her family and in freeing from debt an encumbered farm gives evidence that she was more than an ordinary woman. One who knew testifies: "She was left a widow, with six children, the oldest twelve years, and her husband's estate insolvent. She urged the creditors to let her assume the debt and to leave her the farm. Everybody told her it was only a waste of time, for she could never pay out. Still she insisted, and they agreed to give her the chance. She raised her children, educated them as well as any were educated in those days, paid every dollar of the debts, and saved the home."

Of the daughters, Sallie listened to the plea of Justin Rawls and went on the "long walk"; but Nancy, like her sister Patsie, never married. They both, filled with joy and good deeds, lived to ripe old age at the old home at Somerton. It was often said by people who visited them that these two gave positive proof that old maids could be happy and make others so.

In the Methodist Church at Somerton is a tablet bearing this inscription:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
REV. EDWIN SMITH,
A DEVOTED FOLLOWER OF CHRIST FROM
EARLY LIFE—AND FOR FORTY
YEARS RECORDING
STEWARD.
BORN JULY 6, 1799.
DIED MAY 23, 1874.

"I have fought a good fight;
I have finished my course;
I have kept the faith;
Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

From many sources come corroborative evidence that this tablet gives the barest outline of a most worthy life spent in highest service and fine living.

In the Library at Trinity College, North Carolina, is a remarkably old record of Gates Circuit from 1817 to 1872. This "Record of the Recording Steward" owes its existence and preservation to the long and faithful service of Edwin Smith, whose efforts were duly appreciated by his brethren, for at the first Quarterly Conference for Gates Circuit, 1872, the following resolution was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That this Quarterly Conference tender to Brother Edwin Smith their thanks for the faithful manner in which he has kept their record for forty years, and express their regret at parting with him as their Recording Steward."

The neat and orderly manner in which this record is kept and the persistent fidelity with which this godly man for more than forty years attended the official meetings of his church, scattered over a wide territory, serve as an index to the character of Edwin Smith. Of him a long and interesting story could be told in portraying the life that radiated from his well-ordered home at Somerton; but our interest more especially gathers about Allen Smith, the father of Leroy L. Smith, born September 13, 1804.

Buckland, on the old Gatesville-Somerton road, six miles north of Gatesville, is the ancestral estate of the Bakers. The present colonial residence, built in 1775, was the home of General William Baker. This is one of the ancient landmarks of Gates County.

March 22, 1811, within a mile of Buckland, Susan Copeland was born and there grew to womanhood. She and Allen Smith married,

February 22, 1832. This marriage may have and doubtless did influence young Allen Smith to settle across the line in North Carolina, where he spent a long and active life as farmer and surveyor, many specimens of whose work remain in the public records of Gates County. This, with the care and oversight of his two plantations, gave abundant opportunity for the employment of the energies of a man who put a high premium on the practical. Matter rather than the manner, substance rather than the form, came first; deeds rather than words made most effective appeal to him. To illustrate: He did not deliver temperance speeches and then fall in with the bibulous generation of his day; but when some one used his fruit to make brandy, he proceeded to cut down the trees on his farm, that no one else might ever make brandy of his apples. At a time when a still could be found on nearly every farm, a perfect abhorrence of drink must have actuated such conduct.

To Allen Smith and Susan Copeland were born the following children: Virginius Smith, October 31, 1833; died September 14, 1915. Mary Ann Smith, September 6, 1835; died May 1, 185—. Richard E. Smith, April 28, 1837; died July 1, 1838. Maria S. Smith,

March 31, 1839; died June 12, 1840. Susan T. Smith, December 3, 1840; died May 18, 1842. Josephus H. Smith, April 13, 1842. Bruce Smith, March 18, 1844; died October 14, 1902. Henrietta Smith, October 5, 1845; died in the summer of 1868; and Leroy L. Smith.

Of the nine children, three, Richard E., Maria S., Susan T., died in infancy; two, Mary Ann and Henrietta, barely reached womanhood; one, Josephus, laid his young life on the altar of the Confederacy; and three passed the noontide of life's busy day.

The memorial window in the Methodist church at Gatesville, placed there by the younger brother, who always thought of Josephus as a modern Sir Galihad, remains a beautiful tribute of love and affection. The pure and noble life lived by Josephus Smith and the excellent advice given the younger brother proved a lifelong benediction. The inscription reads:

In Memoriam

JOSEPHUS H. SMITH

Born April 13, 1842

Killed at Five Forks, Va.

In the Conscientious Discharge of Duty April 1, 1865.

Truly and without reserve may it be said that never did young knight in the bave days

of old as he went forth to redress human wrongs cherish a nobler spirit than did this heroic youth of the sixties as he enlisted in a cause so sacred to his soul and so exacting of the fullest sacrifice, even to the limit that he told one after another when they expressed a hope of seeing him soon: "No, I shall never return; I shall die on the field."

That proud yet sad day Josephus rode away into Virginia; as he passed out of the farm gate from the old home Allen Smith was heard to say with a sigh, "I would give all I have could I keep that boy at home!" The young knight never came back.

Virginius and Bruce fared better and lived to see the Southland for which they fought rise from its desolation into new place and power. The one closed a long and busy life in Orangeburg, South Carolina; the other, a leader of the moral forces of his community, in a real sense proved "a friend to man." He passed away at Somerton, Virginia.

Susan Copeland Smith, wife of Allen Smith, was a woman of deep piety, optimistic spirit, and a lover of good books. She died June 25, 1851. So, at four years of age, Leroy was deprived of the loving care of his mother and left in the charge of a faithful family servant. Two

or three aunts, with whom he spent much time during those early years, were careful to see that he was sufficiently indulged. The wonder is they had not spoiled him. In after years he had been heard to intimate as much.

Most of his boyhood passed in close touch with the slaves on the plantations. He played with the piccaninnies and listened to the tales told by the mammies; hunted by night and by day with the men and the boys, and later worked on the farm with the field hands. Many of the Uncle Remus stories were known to him long before Joel Chandler Harris gave them to the world. Too much hoe-cake had been eaten in the cabins and too many hours spent with the negro boys in the open for him not to know the stories and traditions of the race. Somehow, the day never came when he was quite content without a son of Africa within easy call.

Not well could it have been otherwise with a man brought up on a plantation under the watch-care of a negro woman, in the heart of one of the most conservative sections of the old South, redolent of the marvelous past and filled with the cherished traditions of "Ole Virginie." His nurse, "Aunt Adie," in her later years, enjoyed telling how she cared for "Marse Roy" after his mother died. She would recount with

touching pathos how "Miss Susan called me to her jest befor' she died and tole me to look arter 'Marse Roy' jest like I had al'ers done." This she did. A woman of fine feelings, excellent training, received from the folks in the "big house," and characterized by that wonderful fidelity displayed by so many of the race in *antebellum* times, she anticipated his needs and ministered to his wants. She cared for him at home and, at the first, would accompany him to and from school. Through all his early years "Aunt Adie" did her best in doing a mother's part, true to the promise made "Mis Susan."

Mr. J. M. Cross, Sunbury, North Carolina, gives a glimpse of their later boyhood days together:

"We were like most country boys at that time; went to school during the winter and worked on the farm in the spring and the summer. Our fathers' farms adjoined.

"We always had Saturday afternoons off, and spent them in hunting and fishing. As soon as we were old enough to handle a gun, our fathers gave each of us an old flintlock muzzle-loading gun; but they did not believe in giving boys money to spend. So we cut wood at night at twenty-five cents the cord to buy our powder and shot. We had good treeing dogs and would hunt squirrels in the day and opossums at night. Whenever we could, we went into the woods to hunt game. Once Leroy put his hand into a hollow tree, and a squirrel bit his finger so badly that he had trouble with it a long time.

"When fishing was good we spent Saturday afternoons at Norfleet's millpond. As soon as we came in sight of it we baited our hooks and ran as fast as we could, to see who could catch the first fish. Once Leroy was unfortunate enough to stick the hook into his hand so that it had to be cut out.

"In summer we enjoyed swimming, also—always trying to see who could outswim the other.

"We always went to Sunday-school and preaching Sunday mornings, but met somewhere in the afternoon to play. Our favorite game was Bandy. Leroy's two brothers and the two of my brothers, with the negro boys belonging to the families, formed our crowd.

"My recollection is that Leroy was like the rest of us in school—sometimes he had good lessons and sometimes he did not. He was a good boy—above the average. When a young man he joined the church. We were kind in our dealings with each other, and I don't think we ever had even a misunderstanding.

"He was making preparations to join me in the Sixty-eighth North Carolina regiment when Lee surrendered. I think he was about seventeen years of age at this time."

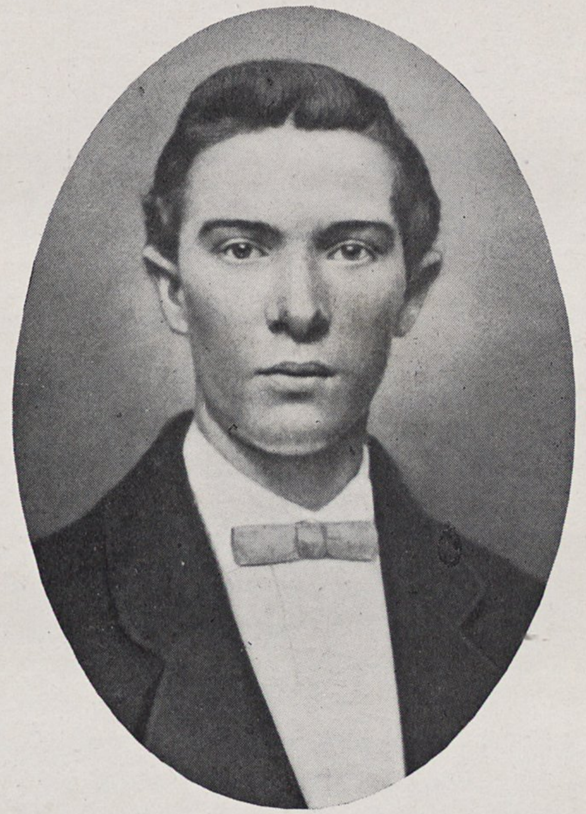
Now, one must keep in mind the free, spontaneous life lived by the boy in the fields and woods, under a southern sky, in fellowship with the youth of two races, to appreciate many of the traits of the man as we shall meet him in his maturer years.

III

EARLY MANHOOD AND COLLEGE LIFE

A youth of the old South, reaching his majority in the later sixties, had not much to cheer his prospect. The old social and industrial sytems had collapsed; former property values were no more; the Government, in alien hands, offered little protection; remnants of broken families remained to weep over their scattered fortunes; and the vicious orgie of Reconstruction crushed hope. What was to be done? How were the issues to be met?

All of Allen Smith's property, save his landed estates, went with the fall of the Confederacy. Young Leroy with youthful eagerness longed to go to college, but the father dissented, having already planned that the son should learn dentistry. A course in dentistry appealed to the father's practical turn, and then, too, it did not require quite such an outlay of time and money, with no practical end in sight. A college course, thought Allen Smith, when finished, was apt to end in a professional career of doubtful advantage. Especially, the one contemplated by the



L. L. SMITH AT 18

son, the law, so full of talk and disputings, did not appeal to the father.

Another incident is this showing how far a father may miss the mark in dealing with his son. Here is a boy with no turn for constructive work or taste for any undertaking in which tools came into use, set apart for a life doomed to failure; for he cherished a dislike for all mechanical contrivances, and the simplest piece of machinery remained to him all his days more confusing than Egyptian hieroglyphics. To fill a tooth would have been for him far more difficult than Greek roots or Second Blackstone. So the making of a dentist gained no headway. The eternal order of things stood opposed.

About this time, the young American, with the fires of youth in his soul, little daunted by the plans of his father, and undismayed by the desolation of his war-swept land, went to his uncle Edwin and told the desires of his heart. As reported by a daughter of the older brother, when the two brothers met and talked it all over, Edwin, with all the fervor of his nature, said: "Allen, *it must be done!* Give the boy a chance. Would I were able to do the same for mine."

In later years, with marked reserve, the mature lawyer would tell of the eager way, in those eventful days, he set about the work on the farm

to make the money with which to go to college. His father's more than forty negroes were free, the big bundle of notes and Confederate money worthless, and all past accumulations scattered. True, land was abundant, but labor very scarce; so real estate holdings could not be turned into cash. Nothing remained but to grow cotton, peanuts, and pigs—for which Norfolk furnished a ready market. Supplied with land and farm fixtures, with the willing aid furnished by his father later as need arose, young Smith made enough the first two years to gain the needed preparation and to put him through college.

It certainly would not be the whole truth to say that the Gates County lad gained his preparation for college in the neighborhood schools and at the Fetter School, Henderson, North Carolina; for at one time Allen Smith gave Rev. James Martin his board and a home that he might be able to give Leroy special instruction at home. Then, too, while doing the carting in the war-times to and from Norfolk, across the country a distance of fifty miles, he read most of Shakespeare, having purchased a volume on one of his trips to Norfolk. Furthermore, during the sixties, *Harper's Weekly,* as it told the story in which three of his brothers

were engaged and in which the future of his land was at stake, found in him an eager student.

Now certainly this quick-witted boy, holding fellowship with Hamlet, Julius Cæsar, and King Lear, as he passed under the whispering pines over the level stretches of tidewater Virginia, with the echoes of the guns of his own embattled kinsmen in his ears, must have felt strange stirrings of soul. This, even with an immature boy, assuredly would be no mean preparation for thinking great thoughts and dreaming of noble deeds. These times, enough to crush any but the bravest spirits, were, indeed, days of preparation.

L. L. Smith entered Randolph-Macon College, Virginia, in the fall of 1870. The college then did not have big endowments and elaborate material equipment, but it did enjoy a wealth of personality in its teaching force. The two men at Randolph-Macon who impressed the young North Carolinian above all others and the teachers from whom he received most, if one is to judge by the much made and the fine memories cherished of these two men in all the after years, were Doctor James A. Duncan, president, and Doctor Thomas R. Price, professor of English. These two notable men

loomed large on the horizon of all his manhood's prime and remained the cherished ideals of his later years.

Duncan, preacher, orator, and philosopher, without a peer; Price, scholar and teacher of English, incomparable in his field; these two, he gave a place above all others. Price, the pioneer, blazing the way for a better study of English in the South, and Duncan, the peerless orator, set the standard of excellence for this Randolph-Macon man in the realm of scholarship and of oratory. To his children he sang their praises, that generations might know.

Two of the men in college with "Smith" (to use familiar college terms)—the men who ever remained to him "Blackwell and Smithey, of old Randolph-Macon"—give a glimpse of his place and influence in the life of the College.

President Blackwell writes:

Randolph-Macon College
ASHLAND, VA.

February 26, 1916.

REV. M. T. PLYLER,
Wilmington, N. C.

DEAR MR. PLYLER:—I was greatly distressed to learn from your letter of the death of my friend, L. L. Smith. I had not seen much of him in these latter

years, but he was a great part of my college life, and living, as I have always done, here at college, I was constantly being reminded of him.

From the very first he was recognized as one of the leaders in college affairs. He had the highest sense of honor and of right conduct, and we felt that he was always on the right side of every good movement in college. No one was truer or more self-sacrificing for the common good than he. He was true as steel to his convictions and could always be depended on.

He was a hard student, and faithfulness itself. He took a leading part in the Franklin Literary Society and held his own with the best men of the Society, like Frank C. Woodward, James F. Twitty, John Hannon, and W. W. Smith. When he was elected to represent us, we were confident that we were going to be worthily represented.

I was not a speaker, but it was my greatest ambition to be able to speak as these men did. During his last year at college I did take some part in the affairs of the Society, and on one occasion he and I were accused of trying to run the Society. I became indignant and made an impassioned speech in reply, denying any intention of trying to dominate the affairs of the Society. I shall never forget how L. L. Smith treated the matter. I have thought of it many times as a model of what a man should say under such circumstances. Instead of getting angry, as I did, he replied in the best spirit, saying that he desired above everything else to have a leading part in making the Society what it ought to be. I remember to this day how rebuked I felt by com-

paring his manly speech with my boyish intemperance, and what an impression his speech made of what the right kind of leadership should be.

I grieve to think that I shall not see him any more here. We knew that he was going to be a great force for good in his community and in his State, as he was among us at college. The world is poorer when such a man leaves it.

Very sincerely yours,

R. E. BLACKWELL.

Professor Smithey of the Department of Mathematics gives, with characteristic accuracy, his high estimate of his friend of college days:

Randolph-Macon College

ASHLAND, VA.

April 3, 1916

REV. M. T. PLYLER,
Wilmington, N. C.

DEAR MR. PLYLER:—Your letter of March 18th came duly to hand.

In reply I will say that L. L. Smith and I were fellow-students at Randolph-Macon for four years. The most friendly relations existed between us. I esteemed him highly, as indeed did all who knew him. He was a true and faithful friend—one that was admired for his integrity, ability, and worth. His kindly spirit rendered him attractive in daily intercourse. He displayed a marked love of truth and a moral elevation of thought that inspired confidence and gave a charm to his character.

Courteous, high-toned, and honorable in his relations with others, endowed with fine qualities of head and heart, and possessing an attractive personality, he easily won the esteem and love of his fellow-students, and was universally popular.

Though I never saw much of him after our college days were over—and this was the source of much regret to me—yet I followed his career with interest and rejoiced at his success. The news of his death gave me much sorrow. The world can ill afford to lose such a man as L. L. Smith.

Very sincerely yours,

R. B. SMITHEY.

The student days of L. L. Smith in the fine old Virginia college filled his life with happy memories of the men whom he came to know and with high appreciation of the blessings which he received. No regrets of wasted hours dogged his footsteps or unpleasant memories shadowed his days.

He won the debater's medal in the Franklin Literary Society and, at his graduation in 1874, was a close competitor for the "Sutherlin Medal," a prize much esteemed by those interested in oratory.

With his graduation and return to North Carolina, separation from the college was not contemplated; for he left Randolph-Macon under contract to return at the opening of the

next session to become assistant in Greek and English. Later, however, upon request, he was released from this engagement, that he might at once enter upon his profession and, thereby, gain the advantage due to the opening made by the appointment of Honorable M. L. Eure, the leading attorney of Gates County, as judge of the Superior Court.

The law license of L. L. Smith bears date January 5, 1875.

EDLA NORFLEET
Just prior to her marriage

IV

MARRIAGE AND HOME-BUILDING

The young attorney, fresh from college, his face to the sunrise, entering upon his professional career under the existing social and industrial conditions following the War Between the States, little knew how genuine a product of his people and of the age he was, and how binding the processes of the long years would prove to be. But acting as the chosen arbiter of his own destiny, fired with the expectations of youth, he relied upon his own individual initiative. The past and the present surrendered to his own buoyant personality. This was not so; but so it seemed to him upon the threshold.

Neither was he aware of the additional forces and influences that by the tender ties of life's holiest associations were destined to shape and to give coloring to his course. Such, however, came to pass; for it was written in the stars and decreed by life's situations; since, adjoining the Smith plantation, the Norfleet farm, with open way and friendly welcome for all the young people of the neighborhood, lay easy of access.

Most natural, then, did it prove for mutual

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interests to arise and for far-reaching plans to be laid. The consummation of which resulted in the marriage of the young attorney and Miss Edla Norfleet, two life-long acquaintances, May 11, 1876.

This happy event brought this young Carolinian, so genuine a product of the old order, into legal and vital relationship with a family which for more than two hundred years had been intimately identified with the life of North Carolina and Virginia. So by this union came another strong tie to the past and a potential influence from the ancient order, contributing to his becoming a lawyer of the old school.

That James Norfleet landed near Suffolk, Virginia, about 1690, with two younger brothers, Abraham and David, is not well authenticated. But it is a well established fact that this same James Norfleet had three sons, James and Thomas and Marmaduke. The will of James, the older of the three brothers, then of Perquimans County, North Carolina, was probated 1732, with his brother Thomas executor. John, son of James, with five younger children, are the legatees named in this will.

The will of John Norfleet was probated 1754, and the will of his son Jacob went to probate 1780.

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Kinchin Norfleet, son of Jacob, was the father of the Marmaduke Norfleet whose plantation adjoined that of Allen Smith and whose daughter Edla married Leroy Smith. So, for six generations back from Edla Norfleet, the old wills and deeds and references in the Colonial Records indicate that the Norfleets were large landholders and interested in the affairs of the people in colonial times, but not given to military life.

Under the Crown a Marmaduke Norfleet of Perquimans was a member of the Assembly as early at 1731, and a Marmaduke Norfleet served in the Assembly in 1743.

Another Marmaduke Norfleet was a member of the General Assembly of North Carolina in 1789.

In 1766 Marmaduke Norfleet sold one thousand and ninety-six acres of land in Perquimans County, North Carolina, to George Washington and Fielding Lewis, gentlemen, a part of which was bought by Thomas Norfleet of Nansemond County, Virginia, as early as 1697.

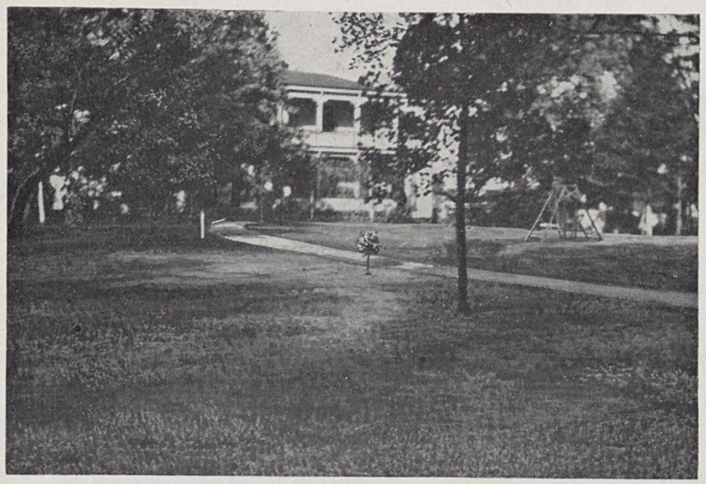
Along with the ownership of land went slaves to till the soil and mills and shops to supply the needs of the plantations.

In the State Records mention is made of a fight in the Revolution at Norfleet's mill on the road between Edenton, North Carolina, and

Suffolk, Virginia. (The site of this old mill is still pointed out.) This, with two other sites on which stand, or stood, Norfleet's mills in Gates County, attests the family's fondness for mill building and ownership.

The foregoing incidents cited are sufficient to indicate how intimately the Norfleets were identified with the rural aristocracy which had grown up under the Proprietors and the Crown, and was continued after the Revolution. Such a system, always conservative, preserving many of the finer elements of life, could but leave a lasting impress. Especially notable did this prove to be in the career of the young lawyer as he more and more became identified with the history and traditions of his people.

Certain customs and habits, social and domestic, came to be a part of his vital breath. Rich with tradition and made sacred by association, they could not be lightly cast aside. Many of the modern views of hospitality—or, rather, the want of hospitality—made no appeal to him. Ancient traditions and customs all opposed the new order. Open house, neighborhood feasts, and friendly family visits through the generations assumed almost the binding quality of a religious obligation for the best people of the former times in this section of North Carolina



THE HOME IN GATESVILLE

and Virginia. To these customs this lawyer of a later day held most tenaciously, not willing that the spirit of the earlier times should perish.

This much has been presented of the past, that the present may become the more intelligible.

The dwelling on the lot bought in Gatesville soon after he began the practice of law early gave place to the residence now standing in the center of the beautiful site so admired and cherished by this intense lover of home. This good, solid, substantial structure, well hedged about with a fine variety of trees, proved to be more than a haven of rest—it was the very core of his being. Never did weary voyager greet the lights of friendly harbor with joy superior to that with which he returned to his village home.

In the yard are the elm, the holly, the umbrella, the gingko, the white mulberry, the beach, the sugar maple, the red maple, the silver maple, the chinaberry, the dogwood, the black walnut, the redbud, the pecan, the Japanese walnut, the Carolina poplar, the English walnut, the sour orange, and the althea. These trees so much cherished and the birds so welcomed to their branches attest his devotion to Nature.

With the coming of the seasons, the birds nested in the trees and sang in their branches.

Seldom came the time when a mocking-bird could not be found about the place. In the moonlight at midnight, perched on some dead branch or, in the early morning hour, near his window some favorite mocking-bird would delight his ear, often eliciting the remark: "I would not take a hundred dollars for that bird." Something of the same feeling did he cherish towards the wren that for years built her nest at his office. All such proved a fine delight to this sincere lover of Nature.

Of his five children, Epia Duncan, Richard Felton, Eliza Norfleet, May Edla, and Blannie Sue, three lived to bless the home and to know a father's devotion. Richard Felton's and Blannie Sue's going in childhood brought deep grief to the father's heart and a tenderer care for the children who remained.

The eldest child early became the object of his efforts to teach bits of song and choice selections of poetry. She also proved to be his happy companion on numerous trips to the farm, when he made her acquainted with the woods and the fields as he told her of trees and birds and plants and flowers. The experiences of those rides and the memory of those early associations give her cause to bless his name all her days. The bits

of song and poetry and bird-lore make the past to live.

This enthusiastic advocate of education counted it a high privilege to give his own children the best in the days of preparation as well as in the later years of study. After careful training in the home and in the village schools, the three daughters finished the course in Greensboro Female College and then did graduate work elsewhere. Epia Duncan, at the Sauveur School of Languages, Amberst, Massachusetts; Eliza Norfleet, under private tutor, Norfolk, Virginia; and May Edla, in Goucher College, carried on the work so pleasing to their father.

But for him education was more than an accomplishment or degree of culture to be secured and paraded for selfish ends. Education is to be treated not as a treasure to be held, as the miser hoards his gold, but rather as an attainment to be used, as the merchant employs his coin in the markets of the world, urged L. L. Smith. Both by precept and example taught he this to his children.

This lawyer of the old school, so jealous for the numerous fine traditions gathering about the women of the old South and so careful to enthrone woman in the home, had slight patience

with the type of womanhood so often portrayed as representative of the Southland. The woman, vain, indolent, and impractical, glorying in her ignorance of affairs domestic, made no appeal to him and received no encouragement in his own home. Educated womanhood, contended he, meant sweetening of the home life, service to the community life, and a fresh impulse to the church life. The special interest displayed by the people of Gates County in the education of the women often elicited his proud comment.

Few children ever had a deeper solicitude shown them or a more unselfish devotion bestowed. But his benefits and blessings were not limited to these. Epia Duncan married Rev. Marion T. Plyler of the North Carolina Conference, and Eliza Norfleet married Mr. Robert R. Taylor, of Gatesville. The children of these two daughters were the objects of the same tender concern as that known to the mothers of the children. His love for little children displayed, both within and without the home, accentuated the natural and normal love due the grandchildren. None escaped his tender care.

The privacies of the home and the delicacies of the situation will not permit the putting down of many incidents illustrative of the finer

sentiments and nobler displays of this husband and father. To those within the sacred walls of home, the best must remain a secret.

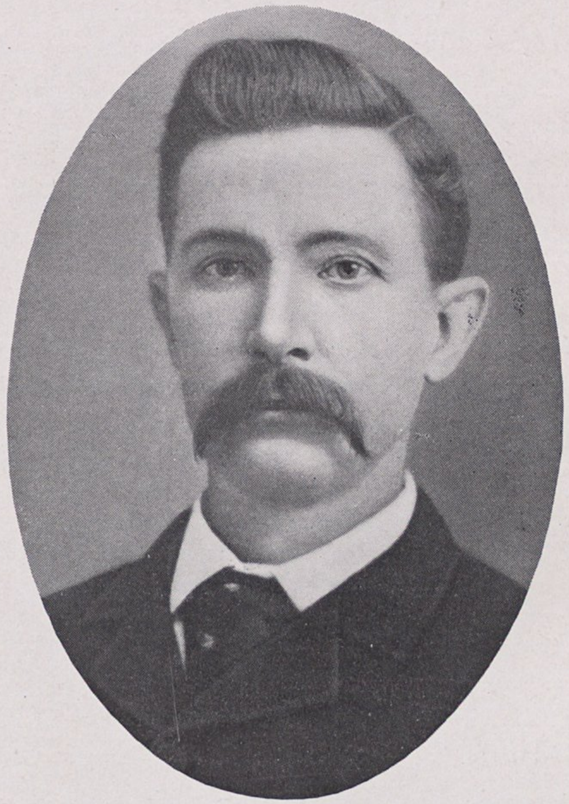
With emphasis should it be said somewhere—perhaps this is the place—that the exalted standard set for the home in Gatesville proved to be the high ideal cherished by this father and citizen for all homes in a well regulated social order. Though a faithful trustee of the Methodist Orphanage at Raleigh, cherishing a lively interest in the orphan, he always looked upon the orphanage as a poor substitute for the home. With him, orphanages, reformatories, and other efforts to save the unfortunate children were but the lame efforts to do what the home had failed to do.

In an address, speaking to boys, he emphasized the fact that after thirty years in public life he had noticed that for a boy who was honest and truthful and sober the chances were nine to one that he would succeed. Then, directing his words to the adults, he with equal emphasis urged that these virtues must be learned in the home, if at all. Absolutely no substitute can be found. No matter how many the panaceas offered, the home remains preëminent. This lawyer of the old school allowed no substitute for the home.

V

PLACE AS POLITICIAN AND CITIZEN

Some men have a genius for partisan politics who, when in the excitement of a campaign, can with rare skill direct the issues of the hour. Like successful captains on the field, they are able, while the battle is on, to note the advantage of every new situation and then use this to enhance the victory. L. L. Smith displayed little ability in this direction. His devotion to the Democratic party knew no abatement, and the day never came when he was not willing to contribute to the success of the ticket; but his interest in politics went far beyond elections and office-holding. As a student of the principles of government, he would justify his course by the assertion, "The principle is right" or, "The principle is all wrong," as the case might be. For example: Believing, with the utmost certitude of a ripened conviction that the whole system of a protective tariff is wrong in principle and could never be justified in practice, he asserted this on every stump when Presidential Elector in 1892, and, thereafter, never wavered from this position.



L. L. SMITH AT 43

A democrat in name is not always a man willing to practice the principles of his democracy; but this could never be said of him, who had been a close student of all the great democrats since the days of Jefferson. At times, with the manifest progress of the spirit of paternalism in government, he grew apprehensive as to what was to be the fate of local self-government.

Twenty years after leaving college, in 1894, he returned to deliver the alumni address at his *alma mater*. On that occasion he discussed the "Growth of Ideas," dealing at length with the political tendency of the times. He argued:

"First, let us consider the idea of paternalism in our Government, which has grown to such an alarming extent within the past few years.

"It was entirely foreign to the purpose of our forefathers in establishing this Government that it should ever become a mere machine for the collection of taxes and the distribution of public patronage and public favors.

"But as great as our progress has been in the increase of population and in the development of wealth and resources, yet in a much greater proportion has been the tendency towards the centralization of power in the General Government, and the concentration of wealth in the hands of a favored few; and out of this centralization of power and concentration of wealth has sprung this fungous growth of

paternalism, which is sapping and destroying the very essence, simplicity, and purity of our national life.

"Strange though it be, yet men in every condition, in every section of the country, and some, perhaps, in every political party, consciously or unconsciously, though antagonistic in sentiment, are contributing to the growth of this abnormal political excrescence. Of all the existing polltical organizations, none except the Nationalists—Edward Bellamy and his followers—are candid and out-spoken advocates of this paternal theory of government. Yet every private beneficiary at the public expense and all who are clamoring for such recognition—from the greedy monopolist in the enjoyment of high tariff rates to the veriest vagabond in Coxey's army, pretending to be begging for work—are all practical supporters of this pernicious and delusive doctrine.

"The largely increased number of nonelective salaried officers—in greater proportion than the expansion and development of the country would justify, in many instances—with excessive salaries, has also been effective in developing this erroneous idea. In proportion to the population, there is a greater number of people today dependent upon the Government for their daily living than ever before in the history of the country; and there is by far a greater number still, not as officers demanding compensation for services rendered, but as private citizens appealing directly to the Government to supply their real or imaginary wants. This false notion of the proper functions of a representative government has not only, incidentally, produced the want, but it

has misled them as to the proper source of supply—to the Government, instead of to their own manly independent exertions as individuals. There is enough waste lands in the South today, if properly cultivated, to feed every hungry mouth in the crowded cities of the North.

"But what is the remedy for the evil? How is it to be applied? What is to be the result? The purpose of government, as declared by our Bill of Rights, is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and all, from the highest to the lowest, should share alike its burdens and its blessings. When the province of government is stretched beyond these proper limits in order to bestow bounties on one class of citizens, then others equally meritorious, and perhaps more needy, will naturally desire to receive the same benefits from the same source. But to magnify an evil is not to remedy it; and we cannot serve despotism and enjoy liberty at one and the same time.

"The proper remedy is to decentralize the powers of the Government; stop all class legislation; minify the Government, magnify the citizen. Reduce expenditures, cut down salaries, if necessary—anything legitimate that will destroy the evil of paternalism and restore the manhood of American citizenship!

"An able jurist with strong democratic proclivities has an article in a recent issue of one of the leading magazines, in which he advocates an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, providing for the election of postmasters and United States Senators by the people; and he urges it upon this very ground: the absolute necessity for the decentraliza-

tion of the powers of the General Government. That may or may not be a proper step to take; but when we begin to move in that direction, light will dawn upon us as we proceed.

" 'There are great truths that pitch their shining tents
Outside our walls, and though but dimly seen
In the grey dawn, they will be manifest
When the light widens into perfect day.' "

The political activity of the young attorney of Gates began in the prohibition campaign of 1881. No act better illustrates the compulsion of principle in shaping the course of his conduct then does this of a young lawyer eager for clients throwing himself with vigor and enthusiasm into such unpopular issue as State-wide prohibition—at a time, too, when temperance sentiment in North Carolina was so wanting among the rank and file. Still, in the face of certain defeat, the efforts of the young advocate of a losing cause intensified to the day of election.

Honorable Hallett S. Ward, Washington, North Carolina, then a boy of eleven years, gives this interesting incident of the first time he saw and heard Mr. Smith. It was in the campaign of 1881:

"I heard his speech at Mennensville. My father and Mr. John M. Trotman were the only two prohibitionists in all that township, and I assume that Mr. Smith knew it before he went there to speak. He had a fairly good audience, and spoke under one of the oaks. I sat among the leaves on the ground and listened to it—the first public speech I had ever heard. The remarkable part of it, as it now impresses me, was the strong, firm determination to advocate his views before so hostile an audience. And I remember, after the speech was over, hearing a man say: 'Whatever you may say about the speech, he is certainly a plucky little fellow!'

"He canvassed the entire county, with the knowledge that there would be no respectable number of votes cast for prohibition, and must have done so, therefore, from nothing but the strength of his own convictions."

But, then, two considerations were in his favor with all fair-minded men, even though they differed widely from him in the position taken on the drink evil: First, he practiced what he preached; and, second, he granted the other man entire freedom of opinion.

In a speech delivered about the time of the campaign of 1881, discussing the subject, "Total Abstinence the Only Safeguard Against the Evils of Intemperance," he announced in the outset:

"I shall discuss this subject boldly and fearlessly, and, I trust, at the same time, fairly and impersonally. I do not propose to heap promiscuous curses

upon the heads of any class of people, nor do I wish to convict any one without a fair and honest trial. I address myself to reasonable men and women, and earnestly appeal to their judgment and good sense. Then, if we cannot agree, it will be merely an honest difference of opinion, and there will be no quarrel between us."

So, in the speech to which reference is made in the foregoing paragraph, this preacher of a temperance crusade states the habit of his life in the subject chosen, and then proclaims the spirit and manner of his discussion in the opening sentences quoted. A temperance man in practice and a prohibitionist in principle was he. He believed that legal enactments would make it easier to secure total abstinence, the only safeguard against the evils of intemperance. Since, contended he, the province of government is to protect the citizen from that which tends to hurt or to destroy, the rum traffic should be prohibited by law.

In 1892, the second Cleveland campaign, L. L. Smith became Presidential Elector of the First District. These were the days of fusion in North Carolina, memorable in the political history of the State for class prejudice and the most violent political partisanship. The country people were told that the day for their

political emancipation had come, and many of them were led to believe that it became a religious duty to hate with a perfect hatred their former taskmasters. Churches were rent asunder, communities set at daggers' point, country cross-roads became seething caldrons of political agitation and unrest, and voting precincts ran with blood.

In this campaign the Elector of the First District made an energetic campaign of the entire district, proclaiming the iniquity of a protective tariff, from the baneful influences of which the only possibility of gaining relief lay in electing Grover Cleveland President.

The fusion of Republicans and Populists in 1892 and in 1894 left most of the Democrats at home. Scarcely enough of them got to Raleigh to watch the "crowd" in the General Assembly. Judge B. B. Winborne in his "History of Hertford County" gives an incident connected with the "Gentleman from Gates" in 1895 which serves the double purpose of illustrating the political conditions in North Carolina and also of showing how sensitive this citizen of Gates was in regard to any impeachment of his honor or reflection upon his integrity:

"They [the Fusionists] had contested about eighteen of the patriots' seats—one-half. The combine

could not get time to consider the contests. They only found time to consider four of them. Three of the patriots they arbitrarily turned out. The committee reported unanimously that L. L. Smith of Gates was entitled to his seat. The report was unanimously adopted. Up to this time the member from Gates sat under the clock waiting for his sentence. After the vote was announced by the Speaker that Mr. Smith was entitled to his seat, the irrepressible little member from Gates immediately arose and addressed the Speaker and began to argue the evidence in the contest for his seat, and desired to prove to the House that he was honestly elected, when the hairless-headed member from Northampton, another of the patriots, arose to interrupt the member from Gates. Permission was given, and Captain Peebles, addressing the Speaker, stated that as the member from Gates seemed not to be satisfied with the action of the House, he moved that the vote by which the 'Gentleman from Gates' was declared entitled to his seat be reconsidered. Smith threw up his hands and exclaimed 'No! No!! No!!!' and fell in his seat like a lead ball. This ended the scene."

However, Mr. Smith did get a statement of the facts in the contest in the *Daily Caucasian* of March 6, 1895, in reply to an article of his contestant, Riddick Gatling.

Gates County returned L. L. Smith to the General Assembly in 1901. This session cost him much in a business and professional way, but he stayed to the end and worked assidu-

ously through the entire session. Of his work the *News and Observer,* of Raleigh, had this to say:

"He was a member of the House of Representatives and one of that band of resourceful and able men who sowed the seed for the Democratic harvest which was reaped in 1898. In 1896 Mr. Smith was a Democratic candidate for State Senator, but went down with the cyclone that defeated all the Democrats of that year. He was elected in 1900 to the House by a large majority. He ranked among the ablest men of that body.

"Mr. Smith was deeply interested in carrying out the constitutional mandate and the Democratic pledge for four months' school for each district in the State, and the bill which finally passed was due largely to his persistent advocacy of this policy.

"His speech in favor of impeachment was one of the best speeches delivered during the session."

The same paper, two years later, reviewing the services of Honorable L. L. Smith in this his last term in the General Assembly, paid him this tribute:

"In these several sessions his excellent ability was brought to play in an honest endeavor to serve the people of his county and State, and how well he did this is known by his countrymen. On all questions he has taken a pronounced stand and fought manfully and eloquently for what he conceived to be right and for the greatest good to the greatest number.

"He is a speaker of much force. Whenever 'Smith of Gates' had the floor all eyes were turned on the man and all ears drank in his words. Supporting the man and his utterances was a well-rounded character.

"In the session of 1895 he introduced a number of bills, prominent among these, one, which has made him the forced recipient of high praise at the hands of the judiciary of the State, an act raising the age of consent. In the recent session he fought bravely for temperance in support of the bill known as the Smith bill."

Fully in accord with and corroborative of the statements hitherto made is the estimate of a son and a servant of North Carolina, who, because of his intimate acquaintance with Mr. Smith and also because of his wide experience in public life, is eminently qualified to judge. This estimate of Senator Overman's parallels to such an extent the testimony of other fine citizens of North Carolina and intimate associates of Mr. Smith that it becomes largely representative and, consequently, may be so received:

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON RULES

REV. M. T. PLYLER, February 12, 1916.
Wilmington, N. C.

MY DEAR MR. PLYLER:—I learned with a real heart-pang and unfeigned sorrow of the death of my

much-esteemed friend, Mr. L. L. Smith. I have been thrown with him officially and unofficially. I served with him in the Legislature of North Carolina and served on committees with him, and looking back to the time when he served his State in that capacity, I unhesitatingly state that I have never known a more patriotic, honorable, and conscientious public servant. He was not only able, but was one of the most industrious legislators I ever knew. At that time, when there was too much of standpatism, he was progressive, and was a strong advocate of measures unpopular then, but which since that time have been enacted into law. One of his virtues was his extreme modesty. He never pushed himself in order to get into the limelight. He was loyal to his State and his party, and no man ever had a more loyal friend. He was always very kind and considerate of those who differed with him. He was a Christian and loyal to his church. He served his county, his State, his party, and his Church faithfully, and when he died the State lost one of her best and ablest citizens. Sincerely yours,

LEE S. OVERMAN.

The one political honor esteemed by him above all others was the privilege of a place in the National Convention at Baltimore, 1912, that nominated Woodrow Wilson for President of the United States. An enthusiastic advocate of Wilson from the first, his eagerness for the success of his candidate became a passion, for

in him he saw victory for the cause of democracy, as well as triumph for the Democratic party.

Though in the National Convention and often in the State conventions of his party, serving as a member of the State Democratic Executive Committee at his death, still, his deeper interests centered in the people of his immediate section. To him no place was like Gates County and no people for whom he cared quite so much as for the people of Gates. Really, his National concern was but the enlargement of his local attachments—the love and loyalty and devotion to a spot enlarged to State and to National lines—and, therein, his primal personal desires for good government, good schools, good homes, and good citizens in Gates passed beyond sectional bounds. He was an American.

VI

INTEREST IN LEARNING AND EDUCATION

William W. Smith, LL.D., chancellor of the Randolph-Macon system, Robert M. Blackwell, LL.D., president of Randolph-Macon College, William M. Baskerville, author and professor of English in Vanderbilt, Robert Sharpe, Ph.D., professor of English in Tulane, and other men of prominence who were in college with Leroy L. Smith attained to superior eminence in the world of learning; but none of them cherished more real fondness for or appreciation of letters than did he. Lest they be lost, his old text-books in Early English and German remained the abiding objects of deepest solicitude, and the doings in the world of scholarship remained of more than ordinary interest. He seemed to look upon those old books as the quiet and persistent reminders of the golden days of his literary dreams.

As so many men are accustomed to do, he often expressed regret that business had not allowed time for reading, and he looked with pleasure to the day when leisure would permit

more time for literary work. The writing of a history of Gates County and the reading of certain authors, too long neglected, were among his plans.

Pure and pellucid English charmed him much. Spelling and form of expression must be up to the standard in all that passed his hand. The modern efforts for reform in many lines of literary endeavor, especially in that for reformed spelling, found slight consideration. Not "thru" but "through" issued from his mint. When the *Literary Digest,* all the later years of his life a regular visitor to his home, adopted the reformed spelling, a sense of disappointment came to him, who was such a conservative in all that had to do with his mother tongue.

Along with literature in general, most of the books dealing with Southern literary effort found in him a ready purchaser. Few Southern writers, as they passed his way, with Uncle Remus at the head of the procession, escaped a sympathetic reading. The stories of Harris fitted so well the experience of his boyhood days and met so fully the fancies of life's prime that he felt thoroughly at home with Br'er Rabbit and all the rest of the "critters."

Mention need hardly be made of the books by North Carolinians and those dealing with the

Old North State. As opportunity offered, so genuine and devoted a son of the State could not have allowed these to pass without a careful reading.

His devotion to and high estimate of North Carolina finds expression in the lines appearing anonymously in the *News and Observer* (1913):

TO NORTH CAROLINA

Here's to the land of long-leaf and bright yellow pine,
Where the trees grow up so fast, so tall, and so fine,
That though the sawmill and the axe may have full sway,
Yet another new forest is born in a day.

Land of peanuts, cotton, and the bright yellow weed;
Persimmons, potatoes, and everything for feed;
Berries, melons and—our cornucopia will show
That anything raised this side the tropics, we grow.

The fish of the sea pay tribute on sound and stream,
The fowls from the North come with the frost's first bright gleam,
Pond and creek abound with game-speckle and the bass,
In field and meadow Bod White nestles in the grass.

A land of great plenty, where the pastures are green
And the fat flocks beside the still waters are seen,
And the best of all, if you will just stop to think—
We have grape-juice, buttermilk, and *water* to drink!

Here's to the land where the mountains are the highest,
Here's to the land where the seashore is the longest,
Here's to the land where the maidens are the fairest,
Here's to the North State, where the men are the bravest.

Peopled by a bold race that must ever be free,
It is hers not just to seem, but rather to be.
Her tokens of pleasure are her workingman's tools,
Her music marks progress in the bells of her schools.

The hum of her wheels drowns the echo of the sea;
The scream of her whistles, the wood thrush's loud, sweet plea,
The power in her waters, and her mines of gold,
Will sooner or later bring her riches untold.

Her hardwoods and minerals are known far and wide;
But wrapt in her bosom are rare treasures beside.
The unfolding of this wealth will come in a day;
The keen-eyed capitalist is looking this way.

Her people, the same that first landed on her coast;
Holding the faith of the fathers has been her boast.
Her temples of worship adorn hamlet and town,
Where the gospel is preached and high critics held down.
The Down Homer may roam, but he will surely find
That his land is now leaving all others behind.
Here's to the land of long-leaf and bright yellow pine,
Where the mocking bird sings in the scuppernong vine.

In response to this tribute to North Carolina appeared the following editorial observation:

THE BEST STATE OF ALL

The lines "To North Carolina" in today's *News and Observer* were written by a gentleman who is so modest as to have requested that his name be not printed in connection with the publication of his production.

We regret that he will not permit the use of his name, for we like to see credit go where credit is due. However, his wishes will be respected; but we take the liberty of directing especial attention to the lines. They breathe the true North Carolina spirit. This is a fine old State in which we live, and our friend has not said any too much about the reasons why we should all love it; neither has he failed to say enough to show that he appreciates the State for what it is worth.

We respond to the toast of our friend with those familiar but ever beautiful lines:

"Here's to the land of the long-leaf pine,
The summer land where the sun doth shine;
Where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great.
Here's to Down Home, the Old North State."

A man of fine instincts and genuine culture, with college training, cherishing a real love of literature through a whole busy life at the bar and in business, could not well be indifferent to

the cause of general education. Indeed, the liveliest concern in matters educational were manifest to the day of his death. He had served ten years as chairman of the board of education of Gates County, and, at his death, was chairman of the board of trustees of Gatesville High School and a member of the board of trustees of the Greensboro College for Women.

In affairs local, in legislative assemblies, and in church councils, education always found an enthusiastic friend and supporter in L. L. Smith. Though he championed the more pretentious efforts at education, the small local school did not pass without sympathetic support. These were esteemed worthy of his best. Evidence of this remains in a brief speech of his at the closing of a small neighborhood school. He magnifies the school and lauds the teacher:

"When Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, debated with his associates the rules that should govern them, they differed in opinion, and one of their number uttered the memorable sentiment: 'Let me teach the children, and I care not who preaches to the people.'

"That became the governing principle of their order; and their unparalleled success in every country of the globe has shown its profound wisdom, and now reminds us of the great importance of early

association and training in the formation and development of human character.

"Indeed, in a country like ours, where the people rule, where the citizen is king, and where law and order and government all depend upon the virtue, intelligence, patriotism, and integrity of the people, the home, and the school and the church become the underlying factors that form the basis of our Christian civilization.

"So long as we have sweet homes, good schools, and evangelical churches in which to teach and train the rising generation, we need not fear that the people—who are nothing but grown-up children—will ever become, in their collective capacity, so impure and corrupt and unpatriotic as to overthrow and destroy the birthright of liberty and law bequeathed to us by our fathers. My hope of the future lies in the present care and training of the children.

"Instead of trying to solve the problems of the next generation, let us rather meet the responsibilities of today, and leave to the world, as an inheritance, another generation of trained minds and hearts and lives to meet duty and responsibility as they arise; and then as the generations come and go, and new problems press for solution, there will always be those who are prepared to meet them, and to grapple with them and to settle them.

"In obedience to apostolic teaching, giving due diligence, let us add to faith virtue (which ought to be done in the home), and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance (which ought to be the product of the schools), and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness

brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; and this is the province of the Church.

"But I am digressing. Going back to our schools, I wish to say that it is matter of congratulation that in our own State and county so many of our good women are devoting their lives to the cause of education. I fear not for the future when the training of so many of our children is in the hands of the pure Christian womanhood of our State.

"We have an illustration of it here tonight. The principal of this school that has given us this delightful entertainment has been so successful in her work that the school board requested me to voice their thanks, and to express to her their grateful appreciation of her faithful service. We need no other evidence than what we have seen and heard tonight to prove your patient and painstaking care in the teaching and training of this school. Those who have employed you say that you have filled to the brim the full measure of your duty.

"The highest compliment that can be paid anything on earth is to say that it has served the purpose for which it was designed, and whoever faithfully performs duty fills the end of being.

"I congratulate you on your success, and your school upon this splendid exhibition of your patience and fidelity and of their culture and training."

In his alumni address at Randolph-Macon College, 1894, on the general subject of "The Progress of Ideas," from which quotation has

already been made in Chapter VI, he discusses sympathetically the advance in education.

He asks:

"Was there ever such an awakening on the subject of education? It is not only extensive in its sweep, embracing every class and condition, but it is also intensive in its aim and purpose; and ambitious scholars more than ever are peering through the mist of the ages after a higher and purer light. It not only includes the broadest intellectual culture, but as a sound mind cannot exist without a sound body, it also aims to develop the highest type of physical manhood. It is not confined to man, who has heretofore been the sole custodian of all advancement and enlightenment, but as it is not good for man to be alone, it has seized and possessed woman also, and made her tributary to its growth and progress; and we find women today all over our land keeping step with men in the college curriculum and in many of the industrial arts and pursuits. And how independent she is becoming!

"If a young lady now wishes to go a mile, she doesn't have to wait for a young man to get a horse and buggy and assist her in and then to help her out at the end of her journey. But with an air of independence she mounts her bicycle and speeds away as fast as a horse, and much more gracefully. But I must confess that this is an idea that has grown much faster than I expected. I am disappointed; and permit me to introduce a brief discussion of it here as a kind of a side-show.

"About three years ago I was sitting in front of the Metropolitan Hotel in Washington City, and a friend sitting by me wished to know if I had ever seen a lady ride a bicycle. I told him of course not; that I had never heard of such a thing. He then said: 'Just sit where you are for a few moments and you will see one'; and, sure enough, in a short while here they came, one after another, until I was fairly shocked. Being warm in my admiration of the proprieties of our Southern women, I remarked with great indignation that I supposed Washington was as far South as a female bicycle would ever dare to go. But lo! and behold! I read this in a paper published at the capital of my own State just a few months ago: 'If ladies will ride bicycles, we are proud to say that our Raleigh ladies can ride as gracefully as any.' Well, I always fight woman's rights until she gets them—and then I gracefully surrender. Like some of the rest of you, I am in a hopeless minority at home.

"But jesting aside, and in solemn truth, the woman of today with the aspirations, privileges and opportunities before her, gives promise of a higher type of womanhood than any mere butterfly existence of a former period could ever develop.

"It is true, there are many advanced notions of the most advanced of her sex—falsely so called—that ought to be eradicated from the sphere of womanly activities; but, whatever tends to her physical, intellectual, and moral development ought to be supported, encouraged, and cultivated.

"Any endowment that will not make her any less a woman, and at the same time will make her a more accomplished queen of the home, will be a blessing to our country and to our race.

"In her organized effort, in her tender humanity, in her self-sacrificing spirit, she is doing more to bring the world together and to hasten the growth of the universal brotherhood of man than every other human agency combined.

"The seeds of that glorious idea of human brotherhood were sown away back when the morning stars sang together; but it has been of slow growth and not in proportion to the growth of the race. Man has been base, sordid, and selfish. His views of philanthropy and benevolence have been circumscribed more or less by order, race, or creed. Not that social conditions be forgotten; not that race distinctions be obliterated; not that creeds necessarily be abolished; but the spirit of true brotherhood rising above these limitations lays its claim upon humanity and then takes the whole race in its arms, and demands that the cup of cold water be given in the name and in the spirit of Him who commanded it.

"But it may be that when woman, in intellectual and moral achievement, is upon an even plane with man, she will soften, refine, and polish the potent agencies of human destiny. When her delicate hand strikes the harp-strings of humanity it will give forth the sweetest music—the harmony of joy and love and peace and happiness to the world!

"So these two ideas, enlightenment and universal fraternity, are not only growing, but they are coming together."

But with the marvelous progress recognized and appreciated, this devoted advocate of educa-

tional advance did not lose sight of the past or discount in the least the work done for education in the earlier days. In the literary address delivered at Louisburg College, 1911, discussing the subject, "Some Things Sometimes Forgotten," he challenged the statement being made by certain prominent educators in North Carolina that the institutions of the past had proven failures as educational agencies; and then he proceeded to show the valuable services which had been rendered by the colleges in spite of their slight equipment and limited incomes. His recognition of the facts too often forgotten by some and his estimate of the work done in the years gone would not allow him to keep silent. Something was due the educational efforts of the past.

When the Greensboro Female College (now Greensboro College for Women) was closed and the property was about to be sold, the owners believing the college could not be continued successfully, this life-long advocate of education, with others, felt that this would be such a loss to the Church and to the educational forces of the State that he threw himself with energy into the work of saving this old and honored institution. Cherishing the conviction that in so doing he was rendering the Church and the

State a needed service, he labored to avert the calamity.

The appreciation of the Alumnæ Association at its annual meeting, May 16, 1916, indicates the interest shown by this body of loyal women who, at the time many hearts grew faint, bore the brunt of saving their *alma mater*. They did not forget his timely aid.

"It seems eminently proper that the Alumnæ Association of Greensboro College for Women should note the death of one of the honored members of the board of trustees of this institution, Mr. L. L. Smith, of Gatesville, N. C. He was one of the first to lend his aid in the reorganization of the college after the fire of 1904, and by his wise and helpful counsel we were lifted out of discouragements that seemed insurmountable. Since that time he has never failed us, but has proven a devoted friend to the institution that he helped to save. He has seldom been absent from the meetings of the board of trustees, and his counsel has always been wise and conservative.

"Mr. Smith not only assisted in the administration of the school, but he gave liberally of his means to its support in the time of its adversity.

"We wish here to put on record our appreciation of Mr. Smith's work and to express our sense of loss in his death. Upon his family we pray God's rich blessings, and commend them, one and all, to that source from which the bereaved must draw all enduring comfort."

The trustees expressed their estimate of his value to the College in the following words:

"Whereas, in the providence of God we have been called upon to release from the sphere of active duty our devoted, faithful, and efficient friend and brother, L. L. Smith, a member of the board of trustees of Greensboro College for Women ever since it became the property of the present owners; and

"Whereas Brother Smith, who was one of its original incorporators, has, by wise counsel, sane judgment, and substantial financial aid, ever been foremost in shaping its policies, directing its destinies, and aiding it in all its progress; now,

"Therefore, we, the members of the board of trustees of Greensboro College for Women, desire to enter upon our minutes this testimonial of our appreciation of his worth. Jealous for the success and good name of our beloved institution, he showed his confidence in its mission by entrusting to its care the training of his own daughters and many of his dearest and best friends. Responding to its call for aid when the property was about to pass out of the hands of the Church, he became one of the indorsers of its paper to secure its original purchase, and when the disastrous fire destroyed practically all of its visible resources, he never faltered in his faith and devotion to the ideal he had set for its aim, but was one among the first to throw himself into the effort to restore the loss and to build bigger and better than before. Through years of conscientious self-sacrifice, he attended nearly every meeting of the

board, and by his wise counsel and mature judgment aided in a very substantial manner in shaping the destinies of this institution.

"*Resolved*, That in the departure of Brother Smith we have suffered a very great loss; but we are sustained in our grief by the consciousness of his eternal gain, for he lived right, and his end was peace, and his example is worthy of emulation by all of us."

Doctor J. Y. Joyner, Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina, in a tender letter of condolence gives his testimony. A quotation from this high source will close this chapter:

"I had known Mr. Smith well for years. I esteemed him highly and greatly admired his patriotic zeal for the promotion of the interest of his community, county, and State, and his active interest and effective aid in the cause of education, both as a citizen and as a legislator. I shall miss him sadly as a friend and as a helper in my work. In his death the State has indeed lost one of its most patriotic citizens and one of its best and ablest men."

VII

DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH

Methodism entered North Carolina through the Albemarle section, and Methodist societies were organized prior to the Revolution. Again and again did Francis Asbury pass through Gates County, preaching at Knotty Pine Chapel and other points, as he went on his annual pilgrimages visiting the societies and laying the foundations upon which after generations could build. So it is literally true that Methodism in Gates County goes back to the great Pioneer Bishop.

Of the Methodist societies in the northern part of the county in the early years of the nineteenth century, Savage's and Parker's and Kittrell's remain to this day. All of these Leroy L. Smith attended in his youth, Kittrell's being the church of his early life. From the dear saints who worshiped there he received early and lasting impressions destined to influence all his after years. Following the rule of the family, this, the youngest son, grew up in the church and in the Sunday-school. In him who early devoted his life to the cause which became

so dear, the joint efforts of the church and the home met.

Along with the family influence and the early training in the church should be reckoned the exalted place given the ministry by the people of Gates County. Down to this present day fine deference is paid the minister for his work's sake. Not as a mere man going about the work of the world, but as a man of God do they welcome him to the home. He is there received as an honored guest worthy to be remembered. To hear the stories told of good men of other times one would conclude that in many homes they had entertained angels unawares.

In such an atmosphere, responsive to the fine influences about him, grew to manhood this loyal Methodist, who cherished for the ministry and the church sentiments worthy of the best among his people, and bestowed in all humility a life of devoted service to the Methodist Church. True as the needle to the pole did he ever remain to the cause of his Lord and to the work of the church of his choice.

For nearly forty years superintendent of the Sunday-school at Gatesville and for more than thirty-five years a steward, many years the chairman of the board, all the while showing

fidelity in his attendance upon the Quarterly Conference and loyalty to the preachers sent to the charge, makes a record not easily paralleled. Even though the preacher sent fell far below the average and failed to meet the demands upon him, this Methodist official would stand by him and urge others to show him the respect and to give him the support due a minister of the gospel. If objection arose to the man sent by the Conference, he would quietly set to work urging loyalty and a united effort for the best success possible.

Reverend W. H. Brown of the North Carolina Conference, who served Gates Circuit for four years and lived next door to the Smith home, declares:

"I feel that I have lost a real personal friend. Brother Smith was always good, kind, and clever to me, and I always looked upon him as being a truly good man. I do not believe that his heart's purpose was at any time or under any sort of circumstances anything but good and right.

"Methodism in Gatesville will miss him. He gave many a valuable hour and much valuable advice, and he and his Lord alone know how much of his material wealth he gave. I do not believe that many more faithful stewards or Suday-school superintendents ever lived. Methodism throughout the State will miss him."

Reverend R. H. Broom, a former Presiding Elder of the Elizabeth City District, writes:

"His was a beautiful devotion to the Master's service; he loved the courts of the Lord's house, and delighted in the fellowship of his brethren, and they were manifestly fond of him. We shall sadly miss him."

On a parity with the words of the ministers quoted is the estimate of Reverend G. T. Adams, Presiding Elder of the Elizabeth City District, at the time of his death:

"Wise in council, tireless in his labors, and generous in his provision for the Church's true progress, his place will be filled with difficulty, if at all."

In keeping with the estimates of the ministers quoted is the expressed action of the Quarterly Conference (1915) of which for forty years he had been a member:

"It is with subdued and saddened feelings we gather in this our fourth Quarterly Conference, because from our ranks has been called our leader, our brother, Leroy L. Smith. The river of death flows between us and him; he cannot come back to us, but above the gentle murmur of the stream we catch the words, 'We can go to him.'

"We, the members of this Quarterly Confernce of Gates Circuit, wish to express our appreciation of the choice spirit that has gone from us and to place on record this our tribute of love to his memory.

"Brother Smith was a Methodist of the highest rank. He jealously guarded every interest of the Church. What he has meant to Methodism in Gates county will never be known until seen in the light of God's approving smile.

"His life was not characterized by any particular feats of brilliancy, but its force and influence was steady, strong, and forceful. He was uncompromising in what he believed to be right. 'We know him now, when all narrow jealousies are silent.'

"We shall miss his hearty handshake, his kindly smile, his words of counsel; but we hope to greet him in the eternal dawn.

"Our tenderest sympathies go out to the sorrowing wife, the bereaved children. May they be comforted in the thought that he did not have to grope in the twilight shadows, but ere the sun went down on his usefulness he was ushered into the light of Eternal Day."

Some men who give their lives to the public and move in a circle wide find no time for the little loves and the miniature efforts of the community about them. This, however, could never be said of the steward and superintendent of the Sunday-school at Gatesville. An old Gatesville boy, Mr. L. M. Cowper, now of Norfolk, Virginia, after years of absence from his former home, bears witness:

"I shall always remember Mr. Smith as my Sunday-school teacher—always in his place, always taking an interest in the young people, with a kind word and a jolly laugh with the town urchins wherever he met us."

The one day in all the year in which joy unrestrained rose to the brim and the abiding interest in the children became delightfully manifest dawned with the annual picnic occasion. Among the prearrangements made, the superintendent usually furnished an extra farm wagon with a span of mules, and abundance of straw to sit on, that no child might fail to be provided with conveyance to the picnic grounds. Another fancy of his was to insist on making the lemonade, so as to be sure that all would get enough.

Then to watch the children eat and drink until capacity failed proved to be the finest fun for both the children and the superintendent. An account of one of these days, the picnic in 1910, sent the *Raleigh Christian Advocate* by Marion T. Plyler, gives some intimation of the significance of these annual occasions:

A PICNIC WITH THE FLAVOR OF YE OLDEN TIMES

The Gatesville Sunday-school had planned to picnic at the "Judge Eure Spring." For days the small talk of the village gathered about the coming event. The children were all agog. No dawn ever ushered

in a day more glorious, for the gentle rain the day before made old Mother Earth tingle with new life and unfolded a scene in earth and sky peculiar to our Southern parallels. The greener green of field and forest beckoned all to the open, while a fresh supply of ozone put new energy into jaded bodies.

Once at the spring, the past and the present crowded upon one. In the welcomed shadows of the oak, the pine, and the poplar one could lounge and watch the capers of the mocking-bird and listen to the silver note of the thrush in the deep wood. Not far away were the reminders of a day that is dead. The stables, the tool-sheds, the cotton gin, the "quarters," the "big house," and other fixtures essential to the plantation "'fore de war," remained. The stately old oaks, more ancient than Washington's elm in Cambridge, had watched the coming and going of the gracious-mannered and soft-voiced daughters of the South in the days when gallant men paid court in the spirit of the knights of old. It was the atmosphere of poetry and romance, such as made the old South. Some of these still, in the out-of-way places, free from the clamor of the loud-mouthed, may be found.

At this spring, through the years, the whispered words of the heart so effective in bringing a new light to the eye and fresh flush to the face, have made memorable the spot. Not a few, mindful of their own past, are glad to feast their children there and to watch the awkward efforts of young swains to play the gallant. So they came on this annual occasion in carriages, buggies, wagons, and carts, with abundance of the good things from all the countryside.

When Reverend W. H. Brown, the pastor, announced dinner, it was literally a feast of fat things—pig, lamb, chicken, ham, corn, potatoes, pickles, cakes, and all, down to iced tea. Later came lemonade, ice cream, cantaloupes, watermelons and else, to suit the taste. As the sun bent low the fish-fry began. Without any purpose to perpetrate a pun, I will say it was literally a full day.

Then, too, the service was rendered with that ease and desire to please possible only to a people who knew in its essence the old-time hospitality of the South. This was really a remnant of "ye olden time"; for there were the servants and the masters, the whites and the blacks, whose ancestors for three or four generations had belonged to the same families, both familiar with the common traditions. Truly, the abundance of good things, the eagerness to serve, the freedom of intercourse, the sly looks and little nothings passed in the groups hanging around the buggies, made the picnic of Gatesville Sunday-school at the "Judge Eure Spring" redolent of the past.

Reverend W. K. Mathews, of Japan, now in Gatesville with Mrs. Mathews' people, before going to his old home in Tennessee, was the guest of honor. He brought with him a breath of the far Orient. So here on this day met the East and the West, the past and the present, glad for another annual picnic day.

But the interests of this Christian lawyer were not confined to efforts local in the work of

his Church. The past, the present, and the future, in their wider aspects, made demands upon his time and thought and effort. He was a close reader of the periodical literature of his Church and a purchaser of Methodist books, historical and doctrinal.

"Methodism in the Albemarle Section," the annual address before the Historical Society of the North Carolina Conference, in Elizabeth City, 1910, elicited much favorable comment and was published in "Historical Papers," Trinity College. At the centennial celebration of Savage's Church, in 1913, he gave an address on the "History of Methodism in Gates County." But his interest went beyond the record of the past, and dealt with the organic life of the Church.

Naturally, the organization of the Church could not escape one so given to a study of civil government. Nor could one so eager to improve existing conditions withhold time or effort if some needed change should be effected. This he found at his own door.

All that section of North Carolina north of the Roanoke River had from the first been in the Virginia Conference. In 1890 the portion of the State between the Roanoke and the

Chowan rivers went to the North Carolina Conference. Four years later the remainder was transferred, making the State line the boundary line between the two conferences.

Holding to the opinion that State autonomy and the spirit of unity essential to the best welfare of a commonwealth should not be hindered but helped by the accidents of church organization, L. L. Smith was led to take a leading part in securing this transfer. He was convinced that the bond of union incident to the commingling of the people in the workings of an annual conference was too valuable not to be utilized. Moreover, with the persistent tendency in trade and educational patronage towards Virginia, he realized that the people of his section of the State were in need of every possible means to hold them to North Carolina. So, with tongue and pen he urged the transfer. In the *Advocates* of the two Conferences involved and before the Committee on Boundaries of the General Conference at Memphis, he got in some of his best work. Though educated in Virginia and proud of the history of the Old Dominion, he was too devoted a son of the Old North State not to give his best for securing that which he believed to be for the best interests of his Church and of his native State.

The testimonies cited and the acts noted in this chapter fail to indicate the devotion of this lawyer and gentleman of the old school to the coming of the Kingdom and to the progress of the Methodist Church. That which is not a form or a method, but a spirit and a life, eludes words and escapes the forms of language. Easier could one transmit the perfume of flowers or gather up the softness of a summer evening than put to record the fine fidelity and tireless devotion of Leroy Lee Smith to the cause of his Lord and Savior.

VIII

CHARACTERISTICS AS A LAWYER

Inherited landed estate made L. L. Smith a life-long farmer; still he always considered himself primarily a lawyer. Though for a number of years he owned and operated a saw-mill, a gristmill, and a store, and, during this time, he also became one of the organizers of the Bank of Gates, of which he was the first and only president until his death, yet with him the law remained supreme.

A sense of regret expressed in later life indicated that but for property holdings and like considerations in his earlier years he would have sought a larger center and wider field for the practice of his profession. This would have afforded opportunities more in keeping with his taste; for the routine of the office did not appeal to him as did the contests in the courts. To have enjoyed a practice in which others would have cared for the office while he contended before court and jury would have met his ideal. As it was, most of his life was spent alone, though at the time of his death Mr. B. L. Banks was with him as the junior member of the law firm of Smith & Banks.

Although L. L. Smith felt bound in all good conscience to give every client faithful service, certain cases involving principles of law not hitherto made clear by the courts enlisted his most eager concern. Such conditions, thought he, ought to be cleared up, even at the cost of time and effort in making a fight to the finish. The case of *Vann v. Edwards* (128 N. C., p. 425, and 135 N. C., p. 661) well illustrates his tenacity in this respect.

Every lawyer is familiar with the advance made in the movement for the emancipation of married women as to their property rights. From the barbarous age when woman was a slave, a chattel, and hence her property, especially her chattels, passed to her master upon marriage, to these latter days of larger liberty and increased property rights, many stages may be noted. *Vann v. Edwards* sets up a new milestone in the property rights of married women, for the Court decided that "A married woman may dispose of her property by gift, or otherwise, without the assent of her husband, unless the law requires the disposition of it to be evidenced by a conveyance or a writing."

This lawyer of the old school cherished with much delight the part he was privileged to take

in securing this opinion of the Court, in the prolonged fight made in the courts. The larger property rights granted married women accorded with his convictions and met the demands of justice.

Once some issue gripped him, as did that in *Vann v. Edwards* for a quadrennium, his thoughts and conversation would cling about it. Pondering it when alone and talking it with the family, he would gradually work himself into clearness of expression as well as definiteness of thought. Though the subject proved of less interest to others than to himself, this habit became helpful in clearing the issues in his own mind and in giving point to his utterance.

Then, suddenly, he would drop the whole matter and be off to the fields or about the house humming some familiar tune or reciting some favorite poem, one of which was Edgar Allan Poe's "Annabel Lee":

"It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me."

Especially fond was he, as he passed towards the close of the poem, of these lines. The music charmed him:

"For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And, so, all the night-tide I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
In the sepulcher there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea."

But in this chapter, dealing with him as a lawyer, I prefer that his brethren of the bar should be heard.

Honorable Walter Clark, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, is eminently qualified to speak. They had met around the board, in church assemblies, in the lower and in the higher courts, as well as having been intimate personal friends through a long series of years. The Chief Justice writes:

"Over nineteen hundred years ago Horatius, the Roman poet, outlined his ideal of the perfect man. To this day it sums up the highest ideal of a lawyer: '*Justum et tenacem propositi virum*'—'A just man and tenacious of the right.'

"Certainly these words can be applied to no one more justly than to Leroy L. Smith. As a man and

as a lawyer he was a close and accurate observer of men and things. He was misled by no illusions, but saw everything and every man in accurate proportions, and when he found a cause was just and espoused it, no one was more tenacious in upholding the right—as it was given him to see the right.

"He was diligent in his preparation of his causes. He understood the facts of his case thoroughly in their minutest detail, and applied the law as it was laid down by the best authorities. He was slow to take up a cause until he was thoroughly satisfied of its justice; but when once he assumed the burden of his client's case, no man made that cause more thoroughly his own. He understood it, he presented it with clearness to the jury and to the court, and usually, as a result, with success.

"No small part of the force of a lawyer, both with judge and jury, is his personal character. It wins oftener than brilliant abilities or thorough knowledge of the cause. When Leroy L. Smith made a statement of the facts of his case, not even the counsel on the other side could doubt the sincerity of his conviction that those were the facts, and the jury was satisfied that he was presenting by evidence the facts as he understood them. There was no concealment and no evasion.

"To an equal extent, this was true in his presentation of the law to the court. There was absolute candor; there was neither suppression of authorities that were against him nor misstatement of the principles of the law; there was no intentional misapplication of the law to the facts as he understood them.

"The result was that he commanded the entire confidence of the juries wherever he practiced and of all the judges before whom he appeared. He could not always win, because sometimes the facts proved to be different from the evidence furnished him by his clients, and sometimes the judges differed with him in the application of the law; but he always maintained the respect, not only of the judges and the juries, but of the public and of opposing counsel, and the good-will of those against whose interests he appeared.

"He did not stoop to abuse of witnesses or parties on the opposite side, and remembered always and under all circumstances what was due to himself and the courts. He was an able lawyer, an honest man, and a gentleman. He was an honor to his profession, and the profession honors deeply his memory."

Mr. W. R. Johnson of the Windsor bar pays the following tribute in the *Hertford County Herald:*

"I had known Mr. Smith for many years. I had appeared in many lawsuits with him; I had appeared as opposing counsel in many cases—thus knowing him as associate counsel and as opposing counsel; and in all of our practice I never knew him to take what is known as a 'nigh cut' to win his case or to so much as suggest such a thing.

"He was clean and conscientious. He espoused the whole cause of his client, and the legal bar often spoke of the tenacity with which he held on after it looked like all hope was gone, and by his tenacity something would often happen which would turn

the tide, and he would win or get a good settlement.

"I was talking with Judge George Cowper, of Winton, once about the earnestness of Mr. Smith, and the judge remarked: 'Leroy never defended a guilty client or prosecuted an innocent man, to his mind.'

"Mr. Smith was generous to opposing counsel and polite to witnesses. He was gentle at all times; it was his nature to be so. In the most hotly contested cases in the courthouse I never saw him appear in the least rattled or knew him to make a short answer to any one. Still he was brave; but the bravest are the gentlest."

At the memorial service observed by the court and members of the bar at Gatesville, Judge Stephen C. Bragaw gave this personal testimony:

"It was not my privilege to know the Honorable Leroy Smith so intimately as did the gentlemen who have spoken so feelingly and sincerely today in paying tribute to his splendid attainments, admirable qualities, and high character; but such observation of and acquaintance with him as I had fully confirm my conviction that there has been no lavish and unmerited praise in what has been said, but only that the simple truth has been spoken.

"My first real acquaintance with him began when there was a vacancy to be filled in the office of Superior Court judge for the First Judicial District, and his friends in the State desired his appointment. There were many who, with keen and correct ap-

preciation of the great responsibilities of this office, regretted that with his great learning, high ideals, and splendid Christian character Mr. Smith was not selected. It was characteristic of him, however, that he should have written to the one selected a generous letter of courteous and sincere assurance of good wishes and loyal support. I am advised that later he introduced the resolution of indorsement of me to succeed myself, in the convention of Gates county.

"Later, when I came to this county to preside over this court, I was accorded at his hands that beautiful courtesy and consideration which is characteristic of the genuine Christian gentleman of the old school. And as I observed his indefatigable energy, his unswerving loyalty and his never yielding persistence in the cause of his client, his courtesy and entire frankness with the court, and his careful preparation of every legal question which might arise in the case, my mental comment was, 'The ideal lawyer and gentleman, the highest type of citizen—a splendid example.'

"I could not say less, and the proprieties of the occasion do not require nor admit of my saying more."

Honorable John H. Small, member of Congress from the First District of North Carolina, in an estimate prepared for the North Carolina Bar Association, speaks in the following terms of Leroy L. Smith as a lawyer:

"In material affairs Mr. Smith was engaged in various activities. He was a planter and loved to visit his farm. The soil and plant life and the open fields held for him a constant attraction. A mercantile business and the operation of a water-power gristmill, known as 'Merchants Mills,' were incidental activities.

"However, he regarded the profession of law as his chief vocation. In this he was a student, although his studies were somewhat intermittent after his practice was established. He was thorough in the preparation of his cases for trial, although occasionally the demands on his time were so insistent that he would postpone preparation to the last minute, when he would bend to his work with zeal and give evidence of his strong mental capacity and unusual power of concentration. While he was liberal to his brethren in the preliminary stages of litigation, and always open to any suggestion of settlement on reasonable terms, yet after he entered upon the trial he, following the advice of a distinguished lawyer, threw away his scabbard and was not disposed to show his adversary any quarter. As a trial lawyer he was deliberate and inclined to exhaust all available evidence and to cite and rely upon all propositions of law which might strengthen his case. One of his brethren once said of him that he did not know when he was defeated. With all his zeal and persistence, howveer, no one ever questiond his fairness or integrity.

"He was fixed in his convictions. He had both intellectual and moral stamina. Whatever knowledge he acquired that seemed to be sound, he made a part of his equipment and was not inclined to discard. He was well versed in the fundamentals of

our Government, both Federal and State. He revered the Constitution of the fathers and did not receive favorably some of the new political theories. Like every strong man who reaches a deliberate conclusion, he put the burden of proof on any suggestion of a new theory or conviction. On all moral questions he was as firm as adamant.

"His influence was sturdy and strong. He would not bend to the passing breeze. For his family, his community, and his State, he left a record worthy of emulation and which in the years to come will be a source of encouragement and inspiration."

IX

APPEARANCE AND PERSONAL TRAITS

Five feet and six inches tall, erect, animated, well poised, complexion florid, hair red, accustomed to move with quick step, always appearing much younger than his years, this lawyer of the old school practiced his profession and gave attention to his farms, the picture of health and the champion of youth. Strictly temperate, a total abstainer as to drink, he enjoyed three full meals a day and lived enough in the open to preserve a good digestion and to prevent an undue increase of flesh with the encroachment of age.

For years he kept hounds and occasionally followed the chase. Not that he gloried in being in at the finish, or found special pleasure in the peril of the pursued, but rather for the joy of life in the open, did he ride with the hounds. Then, too, the stories told of the superior lead-dogs—the best that ever gave tongue—in former times, revived memories that did much to keep alive the pleasures of the hunt in his later years. Although he did not listen with credulity to the fancies of the chase, he did cherish with

eagerness the traditions of the gentlemen of the old school and prove most sensitive to the memories of the decades gone.

This devotion to the ancient ways and to the things of the past finds exemplification in the tenacity with which he held fast to the same stock of horses. With evident pleasure would he refer to the fact that these were of a well tried old stock. There were "Old Addie," and "Lizzie," and then "Pelham," and, again, "Lizzie II," and, finally, "Splendor."

These five generations, covering a period of forty years, proved to be fine equine links binding the present to the past. "Pelham," the most prized of them all, was in very truth to Leroy L. Smith what "Traveler" was to Robert E. Lee. Endowed with far more sense than the average, this good trusty steed knew all the woods and roads and fields of Gates County. Following the chase, out in the woods on land deals, surveying the farms, and in long trips on legal business, this faithful horse, so sure of foot, carried his rider for twenty years. The testimony of his proud owner, repeated over and over again, was: "The best ever made!" "Pelham" did not, like an old automobile, go to the junk-heap, but, when retired, he received the best his devoted master had to give. To turn

this old horse out to die was unthinkable. It would have been a crime against the ancient stock as well as cruel neglect of one who had become almost as a member of the family.

This fondness for the past, dominant in a man so conservative and yet, at times, so progressive, became fully manifest in many of the minor ways of life; perhaps in none more than in the little incidents about the home.

Though he fully appreciated stoves, put water and gas in his dwelling, installing his own private plant, and welcomed every modern convenience, often even becoming enthusiastic over the progress of science and invention, he never would consent to surrender the open fire in his living room. Whether he saw in the radiant glow, as the fire burned, the reflection of the forms of his ancestors in the brave days of old will never be known; but it is well known that for him to rise before the dawn and, with the exactest care, to build a wood fire and to watch it burn afforded him the highest delight.

Did not the boyhood days of tender memories return, bringing a renewed sense of youth? Evidently, the life-long fondness for toasting certain articles of food by the open fire arose in the far-off days of potatoes and hoe-cake in

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the cabins with the youth of another race. At any rate, this desire for the open fire—a fire so helpful in filling life to the brim—held out to the end.

Accuracy and precision, following a uniform plan, became a leading trait with this lawyer of the old school. Whether preparing a brief for the Supreme Court or harnessing a horse for a drive, the same precision was demanded. Always painstaking in his dress and neat in his appearance, with due regard for the seasons and the proprieties, the most uniform methods were followed and habit obeyed. The two-piece suit never found in him a purchaser. Hat and vest on out of doors, hat off and collar and tie on indoors, was the standing order.

The finer sentiments of life and the deep emotions of soul often found expression in fugitive rhymes and paragraphs which he would write and stick away in his desk, later to be lost or destroyed. A fragment of one of these is allowed a place, illustrative of some of his by-products. These are the lines written following the death of one of his own children:

THE BUDS THAT NEVER BLOOM

"Of all the flowers of wood or field,
That aid the world of gloom,
Which are they the richest promise yield?
The buds that never bloom.

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"The tiny bud nipped by early frost,
Wrapped in leaflet secure,
Though a part of its beauty be lost,
Is perfect, sweet, and pure.

"The young, rounded bulb, so full and fair,
Shall never burst full bloom
To lend *all* its fragrance to the air
And make its beauty known.

"But still it gives joy in its brief day,
And fills its mission well.
So bright, it promised a longer stay
Of life before it fell."

In the family circle his fondness for mimicry and jest appeared at its best. To act out in the presence of the family the doings and sayings of some odd character he had chanced upon would furnish amusement for an evening; or to engage in some of the village festivities surpassed anything the hippodrome had to offer. Few of these events did he let pass without lending his presence. Local pride and interest in his own people would not permit of neglect. One of the Gatesville boys, already quoted, now in another State, recalls an incident on the occasion of a play in the Gatesville courthouse:

"Epia would grind my father's old corn sheller and out would come different notable personages of the past. I called for Cleopatra; Epia turned the sheller and out stepped Eva, dressed as Cleopatra. After

this fashion the play went on. Before the play came off, I asked Mr. Smith if I could not toast Epia as follows:

"'Here's health and happiness to one
By whom both time and space are outdone.'

"Mr. Smith's reply was that I did not have the right number of feet to make the rhyme."

All such local ventures made striking appeal to this lover of home and admirer of the home folks. Whatever they did or tried to do had an appreciative auditor in this loyal friend and citizen.

The week before he died, the coming of a chautauqua to Gatesville, made possible by the people of the village and the county, proved a delight to all. He returned one night from the appearance of Durno, the magician, and in a playful mood put down these lines:

DURNO, THE MYSTERIOUS

"Oh, Durno, Durno—oh, I don't know
Whether it's Durno or Inferno.
Dunn(o) him, he frightens and bothers me—
Tends to make snakes and things for me to see.

"Whence came those things, *if not from below?*
Oh, I don't know. But one thing I know,
If *things* play out in the Inferno,
They had better send *quick* for Durno."

The incidents and trivial happenings in court, especially the doings and sayings of the negroes,

furnished no little fun in his hours of leisure. This was, indeed, to him, law in a lighter vein. His close association with the old-time negro gave a keen appreciation of the negro character, especially when mixed up in a scrap in the courthouse. One of these is portrayed in the following:

BLOW AND JYNER IN COTE

"Blow and Jyner had a fuss,
And dey took it into cote,
Where dey made a mighty muss
Dat each one had to tote.

"Jyner he sho went for Blow,
And Blow he went for Jyner;
But when each one made a show
De yuther one made it finer.

"Jyner puts in his evidence,
And made it good and strong;
Den comes Blow wid his defense,
And sed Jyner sho was wrong.

"Den de Jedge he told de jury
Dey needn't bleeve all dey told,
And aldough dey swore like fury,
Dat 'not guilty' dey might hold.

"So dat is what de jury sed
As soon as dey come in.
But de way dat Blow and Jyner bled
It sholy was a sin.

"And den de lawyer for de State
Up and sed, if dat was all,
Der's no more Blow and Jyner case
Dat he would eber call.

"And den he '*prossed*' 'em ebry one
Dat won't already tried.
He looked and sed dat he were done—
Like he thought dat bofe had lied."

These fragmentary incidents are but the outcroppings of a life rich with a fine sense of humor and a full appreciation of the ludicrous. Would that more of them were available to better illustrate this side of his nature.

The one story of perennial interest to him who had passed his youth in the sixties gathered about the titantic struggle between the North and the South. Ready to enlist when Lee laid down his sword at Appomattox, the fascination of the theme never escaped him. No one who passed up the slopes of Gettysburg with Pickett's and Pettigrew's immortals knew more about that crucial battle than he. For hours he could sit and describe the movements of the various regiments and divisions in the three days fight, and then criticise the movements of the third day. He had studied the field, read the books, visited every cyclorama of the battle within reach, and conversed with old soldiers,

until the field at Gettysburg was as familiar as the woods and fields of his boyhood.

Being a close reader of the newspapers during the war and a student of leading periodicals since that time, Mr. Smith had become well informed. Then, too, he made a special study of the Confederacy and the events of the Civil War. He bought and read "From Manassas to Appomattox" (Longstreet); "Messages and Papers of the Confederacy" (Richardson); "Life of General Bedford Forrest" (Wyeth); "Personal Reminiscences of Robert E. Lee" (Jones); "Reminiscences of the Civil War" (Gordon); "Story of the Confederate States" (Johnson Publishing Company); "The War Between the States" (Stevens); "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government" (Davis); "Life of Robert E. Lee" (Page). Along with these, the pages of many another volume akin to them passed under his eye.

A love of nature similar to that felt by Wordsworth proved to be the most pronounced trait in this man who held such fine and intimate fellowship with Nature. The trees and the birds, the fields and the flowers, the woods and the skies, the fragrance of the corn and the smell after the rain had a strange fascination for him. An unusual feeling, a sort of strange

sense of ownership not often met with, arising perhaps out of an intimate personal fellowship with certain loved objects, became with him almost a passion. A mocking-bird accustomed to sing in a tree by his window became to him "my bird"; certain rare wild flowers growing in secluded spots visited year after year were known as "my flower"; a star notable for its prominence in the sky through the years of his boyhood's hunting in the woods remained "my star." Thus, in his sympathetic and loving fellowship, a peculiar sense of ownership sprang up, proving with the years to be a high and fine and ever increasing delight.

To walk over the fields and to ramble through the woods, to watch the growing crops and to drive home at night under the stars came to be a habit of life. As a rule, the start to the farm would be planned late enough so as to prevent his expected return until after dark. The deepening shadows, the faint outlines of the trees, and the open skies made their appeal. Out on these rides, the stars of night beat with emotion, and he could say with Browning in Saul:

"Then were witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and to right,
Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the aware."

X

COLORS ABOUT THE SUNSET

To mention Napoleon recalls war; to name Newton suggests science; to speak of Columbus reminds of discovery; to write Heroditus brings up history—for these illustrious names so fill certain fields of vision as to preclude every prospect save the lofty peaks of their own attainments. The same, in a minor way, is true of smaller men who become celebrated because of some one achievement in a definite line of action. Many, notable as merchants, lawyers, politicians, mechanics, inventors, loom large in certain fields of effort, never to be noticed in other lines of action; others, equally notable in their chosen fields, do their work in such a normal way and with such fine poise that men fail to note how excellently well they fill their places and do their work. A few years ago a much beloved minister in North Carolina passed to his reward. Some one, commenting on the slight reputation he bore as a preacher, elicited from one of the State's best and wisest men the reminder that the brother in question was such a level-headed business man and manager of men, so fine a pastor, and effective personal

worker, and, withal, such a perfect gentleman, that men usually lost sight of the really superior sermons he gave them.

Without the slightest violence to the truth, the same may be affirmed of this lawyer of the old school. The more notable, with the gathering colors about the sunset, became the composite elements of his character, mixed in such a way as to obscure any one line followed or interest cherished. So, to keep Christian character to the front, he did his work and passed to the consummation of his days.

From the day that Chief Justice Pearson, and the other justices, signed the law license of L. L. Smith, to the day of his death, he practiced his profession, faithful to his clients and true to himself. As a citizen in the field of politics, the years of his public life were lived in all good conscience for the welfare of his people. An interest in learning and an eager desire to promote education began in early manhood and continued through many busy years. Many a day and not a few dollars, accompanied by prayer and backed by an unwavering loyalty, went to aid the cause of Christ. But not in any one of these lines of action does this lawyer, citizen, lover of learning, and churchman stand out preëminent. Had he given himself more

entirely to any one of these to the neglect of the others, the result might have been the more striking, though less effective. His interest in farming and, for a time, in a store and a mill, still farther divided his efforts. All these, however, sink into the background in the presence of his personal character, his devotion to family, and his loyalty to the higher demands of citizenship.

Few men cherished such a high sense of honor as he. The most successful way to arouse his indignation was to impugn his motive or to attack his integrity. With honor unsullied and reputation untarnished meant he to pass his days, showing himself straight and true and high-souled. So, when he found one who proved himself unsound at the core and wanting in the essentials of truth and honesty and sincerity, confidence waned and respect departed. The prestige of station and the gloss of gold counted for little if the man failed to ring true. Above all place and attainments stood a genuine Christian character.

Sometimes this trained lawyer appeared not to care for the facts, nor to cherish an open mind. But this was only in the seeming. Some men and measures had been an object of study and observation until they had ceased to be

subjects for discussion. This attitude of mind came as a result of patient study and waiting. To illustrate: When Theodore Roosevelt came into public notice, he bought and read a number of Roosevelt's books and kept a close watch on his speeches, with the result that he could not follow the Rough Rider. The years, with their crowded events, only confirmed his early views of the Colonel and lessened his respect for the man. So, when the former President broke with William H. Taft, the man of his own choosing, that, or other acts of the Colonel, failed to surprise, and words of his, however pretentious, failed to get a hearing from this lawyer who had already secured a verdict in the court of reason.

Though he would not admit the approach of age, the dominant traits became the more pronounced with the passing of time, and the weight of years began to bear down upon his bodily movements and mental activities. This became most apparent to those nearest him. He had bought and was reading with jolly good humor "The Man Who Grew Young at Seventy," and was putting into practice some of its teachings.

The Church and secular papers and magazines, a half-dozen of which came regularly to

his home, received a careful reading. But his interests in many of the practical issues of the day were not as alert as formerly. The position expressed by former Governor Thomas J. Jarvis a few years ago, when the writer, becoming enthusiastic over some book he was reading, received the information from the grand old man of four-score that no book interested him any more but the Bible and his law books, lay not a long way ahead of L. L. Smith. The inevitable had come.

A life-long concern for his family had ripened into a devotion beautiful and notable. Manifested in so many ways and displayed at so many turns, it became known beyond the seclusion of the family circle. A press dispatch at the time of his death stated:

> "Never was there a more united family than his. The devotion and love of each member of the family was most touching and beautiful, and being so closely bound together by the cords of love, the more was their grief at this separation."

The same dispatch adds:

> "Mr. Smith was a devoted husband, an affectionate father, a loving grandfather, a true friend, a loyal and patriotic citizen, a liberal supporter of the Church, as well as of the poor and needy; an able

defender of the weak and the oppressed, a strong advocate of all educational enterprises, a dear lover of children and of all things beautiful, and a high-minded Christian gentleman."

Lawyers who met their Brother Smith at court so often found him with the word of God that some held to the opinion that he never left home without his Bible. One expresses it thus:

"I have been in his room at the hotel, when visiting court away from home, and often saw his Bible. I do not believe he ever left home to spend the night without his Bible being placed in his suitcase.

"He tried earnestly to follow the teachings of his Master. He read his Bible and received its teachings as messages to him from God. His faith was simple and childlike. He accepted the teachings of the Bible without question."

With him, Sunday afternoon, having attended church and Sunday-school in the morning, was given to the Bible and to the Church papers. The *Advocates* of Raleigh and of Richmond and of Nashville would receive careful perusal. If there chanced to be some issue of special moment before the Church, he would follow with interest the presentation of the same. A judgment formed, after careful consideration and full deliberation, refused to be subject to the rash dictates of the arbitrary

leader. For this type of man, in affairs of state or in matters of church, no tolerance could be shown. He desired reverence, humility, sincerity, fidelity, and Christlikeness in the would-be leaders of Zion, and, without pretense, he held himself to this standard. To him One was Master, even Christ.

XI

THE EVENING CALL

The brown of the crisp October days told of approaching autumn and the shades of another Saturday evening gave promise of a Sabbath of rest and worship. Gathered with the family in the library, the husband and father read the *Christian Advocate* of Nashville, Tennessee, studied the Sunday-school lesson for the next day, read aloud two of Stoddard's lectures, and conversed with the family until about 9 o'clock, when he remarked that, feeling tired from the exertion of the day, he would retire. This he did.

While kneeling at the bedside in prayer, he said to his wife: "I feel dizzy; I don't believe I can get up." She stepped quickly towards him, but as he rose to his feet, he fell to the floor. She cried for help, and the doctor was hastily summoned from across the street; but before the physician arrived, he was gone. In the blessed quiet of home, at the close of day, in the hour of prayer, suddenly came the call.

The ordeal proved the more trying because of the want of premonition. An attack rather

severe for him a week before had left him enfeebled, but he was out and down to the office. Though much below his accustomed vigor, a few days were thought sufficient to bring the needed restoration. He had been so uniformly vigorous and carried his age so well, no one had thought of a collapse or sudden end of the journey.

Being himself so fond of life and so entirely devoted to the spirit of youth, he allowed the infirmities of age and the pall of death no place in his meditations. If some one turned the conversation in this direction, a new theme, incidentally suggested, would divert the current of talk into another channel. Not that the issues of the future were ignored, but rather that daily existence be not shadowed seemed most pleasing to him. Not even in the intimacies of the home did he plan or suggest cherished plans to be executed when he was gone. He did, however, remark, following the attack noted, that once he thought the end had come, but it was all right save that he had a few little business matters he would like to get straight.

So, with startling suddenness, death, as a rude intruder, broke into the household of L. L.

Smith, to overcome the master of the house, but not to find him unprepared. An early preparation and a whole long life of service and devotion looked to this day. And those who knew him best are confident that for him who so abhorred age and infirmities no other going could have been more pleasing or call more welcome.

Saturday evening, 9:30 o'clock, October 23, 1915, the loyal citizen and brave champion of the rights of the people, the lawyer of the old school, answered the final summons. His death came as a sore grief to the family, a painful shock to his friends, and a great surprise to all. The neighbors and friends of the village and of the county offered every condolence, messages of sympathy poured in from the State and beyond, and words of appreciation of the departed came from every walk of life.

As expressed in the *Albemarle Observer* under the figure of the angel reaper: "Ripe, full, and rich was the gleaning, as for sixty-nine years the life of this noble and good man had been growing and expanding, becoming richer and fuller; and thus, at the close of his earthly career, yielding an abundant harvest."

"Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

The *News and Observer,* October 25, 1915, carried the following account of the funeral:

"Funeral services were held over the remains of Mr. L. L. Smith today in the Methodist Church, of which he was a devoted and active member. Long before the hour for the services his friends poured into town, bringing with them inward and outward expressions of their regard for their deceased friend, sympathy for the bereaved family, and a profusion of flowers for his body.

"At 2 o'clock p. m. the church was crowded to overflowing with friends who had gathered to pay silent and tearful homage to a great and good man who had gone from among them. The services were conducted by his pastor, Rev. G. W. Fisher, assisted by Rev. T. M. Grant of the North Gates circuit and Rev. G. F. Smith, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Elizabeth City. No regular sermon was preached because so many of Mr. Smith's friends wanted to give expression to their high regard for their departed friend. Mr. S. I. Harrell, representing the board of stewards of Gates County, made a short talk and spoke of the great good Mr. Smith had been to the Methodist Church in this county, and also spoke of the great inspiration imparted to him by the Christlike character of Mr. Smith.

"Mr. Pruden of Edenton followed. Mr. Pruden was one of Mr. Smith's life-long friends. Mr. Pruden stated that he was three days the senior of Mr. Smith; that they had grown up together from boyhood days and had been close and intimate friends from their first acquaintance; that he had been with

him in the courts, and that while they had had their squabbles in the courtroom, Mr. Smith was always fair, honest, and neither sought nor took advantage of an adversary, and always came out of the legal fight as fast friends as ever; that nothing had ever marred their friendship; that Mr. Smith was always true and faithful to his clients' interests, and that he was always a Christian gentleman, like he, himself, had always tried to be. Mr. Pruden's talk was charged with profound sympathy for the bereaved family and his words found an answering echo in the hearts of Mr. Smith's friends, evidenced by the tear-stained eyes of every one present.

"Judge B. B. Winborne of Murfreesboro, another of Mr. Smith's friends, next spoke, and said that he first became acquainted with Mr. Smith when they stood the Supreme Court examination together in 1875; that he had learned to love him since; that he had been constantly thrown with him in the various courts of the State, and that he had always found Mr. Smith an able and learned lawyer and one who was upright in his dealings with his clients, faithful and unswerving in his allegiance to them, and honest and ethical with those of his profession; that they had been friends all their lives, and that Mr. Smith's character was symbolical of everything good, honest, and true. He also extended his sympathies to the grief-stricken family.

"Rev. T. M. Grant, who assisted in the services, also made a short talk, and stated that while he had not known Mr. Smith as long as some of those who had preceded him, he had known him long enough to catch an inspiration from his character which would remain with him throughout his life.

"Every seat in the church was filled and the aisles were crowded with those unable to find seats, while on the outside were numbers of Mr. Smith's friends who could not get in the church.

"Court was going on at Winton, but when it was learned that Mr. Smith's funeral was to be held today, Hon. C. C. Lyon, the judge presiding, adjourned court, and he, together with the attending lawyers, came to pay their last respects to their friend and brother in the profession.

"The active pall-bearers were Messrs. C. C. Savage, J. A. Brown, R. E. Williams, Rufus Riddick, Jr., N. J. Riddick, B. L. Banks, Jr., W. R. Cowper, and Edgar Cross. The honorary pallbearers were Messrs. T. G. Hayes, L. A. Cowper of Norfolk, Dr. E. F. Corbell, J. M. Cross, F. N. Cross, C. M. Manning, H. B. Cross of Norfolk, S. B. Harrell of Norfolk, J. A. Harrell, R. M. Riddick, Sr., C. E. Kramer of Elizabeth City, T. W. Costen, R. W. Gatling, H. C. Williams, and S. I. Harrell. The honorary pallbearers were laden with the profusion of beautiful flowers sent in by the friends of the family.

"Numerous were the friends of Mr. Smith who attended his funeral. They came from all the adjoining counties, and from Edenton, Elizabeth City, Norfolk, Suffolk, Winton, and Murfreesboro.

"The services were concluded at the family burial ground. The services were short but very impressive. As the sun's rays dipped in the West his remains were lowered in the grave while the tears coursed down the cheeks of his family and many friends.

"Mr. Smith's life was open, sincere, and simple, and it was very fitting and proper that burial should

be amid the scenes of his childhood, out in the open stretch of pure air and amidst the simple scenes of farm life which he so dearly loved and which is expressive of the purest in simplicity.

"Mr. Smith's death has cast a gloom over the entire county, and his departure will be missed by his many clients; by his State and county; by the educational institutions for which he was an energetic worker, and by his church and its auxiliaries. Never was there a man in this county who was more universally loved, and his Christian life and character, his many good deeds and examples, will live long in the hearts and memories of his friends."

Thus ended the earthly sojourn of one most vitally related to the past by tradition and hereditary influence and much engaged in this living present to serve well his day and generation by making his limited world a better place in which to live. More intelligence, finer citizenship, better morals, a sweeter home-life ever found in him a strong advocate and true friend. So long as he lived he could always be found among those fighting for the things that remain, and when he died those who knew him best appreciated him most.

Laid to rest under a wealth of flowers in the quiet seclusion where sleep his sacred kin, the birds sing as the seasons come and go and the circles of his life widen, for he had eternity hid in his heart.

AN APPRECIATION

BY

HON. W. D. PRUDEN

AN APPRECIATION*

By Hon. W. D. Pruden

Leroy Lee Smith, son of Allen Smith and Susan Copeland, his wife, was born in Gates County February 8, 1847, and died in the same county, where he always lived, October 23, 1915. The people of this county are noted for their individuality, their strength of character, and the courage of their convictions. Mr. Smith was a typical Gates man, representing in himself the best of Gates life and character. His family on both sides have been prominent in the county for many years; they were leading Methodists, and to that fact Mr. Smith owed his name. Rev. Leroy Lee was an eminent preacher of that Church about the time of his birth.

Mr. Smith obtained his education in the neighborhood schools of his native county, in the Fetter School at Henderson, North Carolina, and later at Randolph-Macon College, Virginia, where he graduated with distinction in 1874. After his graduation he was elected by the faculty of Randolph-Macon to teach Greek

*Hon. W. D. Pruden, of Edenton, N. C., was Mr. Smith's most intimate personal friend. A personal and professional correspondence continued between them through the years, and when away from home at the courts it was their custom to have room together at the hotels.

and English in the college, and applied himself diligently to preparation for the duties of his new position. In his youth he laid wide and deep the foundation of that literary culture which he afterwards maintained. About this time Hon. Mills L. Eure, who had been a prominent lawyer in the district, residing in Gatesville, was elected judge of the Superior Court and quit the practice.

Because of this, Mr. Smith asked to be and was relieved of his engagement with Randolph-Macon, and at once devoted himself to the study of law, that he might return to his home and occupy the field left vacant by Judge Eure. In 1875 he obtained his license to practice law before the Supreme Court of the State and returned to Gatesville, where he at once took high position as a lawyer and was, up to the time of his death, active in the practice.

He was not, however, merely a lawyer, but found time to apply himself to other things. He was devoted to the Church of his choice and always ready to render it loyal and zealous service; he was a steward forty years and for many years superintendent of its Sunday-school. He was often delegate to the Annual Conferences and once to the General Conference at Baltimore. He was also trustee of the Method-

ist College for Women in Greensboro and of the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh at the time of his death. In whatever capacity he served the Church, he was recognized as a wise and able counselor. While in no way ostentatious, he was a deeply pious man and manifested his loyalty and love for the religion he professed in every walk of life. He carried with him to the courts his well-worn Bible, and we doubt if he ever failed, whatever his engagements, to read it daily. The writer often found him, before retiring at night, engaged in his daily devotion.

North Carolina never had a more loyal and devoted citizen. He did not enter the Confederate Army, because of his youth, and because, further, when he was about sixteen years of age his county was cut off from the Confederacy and left within the enemy's lines, and it was difficult for him to get out and unite with the Army without involving the safety of his people. He made several efforts to go, but was prevented by the circumstances surrounding him. He had three brothers in the Army, one of whom was killed, and no man who wore the gray was ever more loyal to the cause and readier to defend it upon all occasions against attacks from whatever source.

He was prominent in public affairs and greatly trusted. His first public service was in the Prohibition Campaign of 1881, when he canvassed diligently for prohibition, and ever afterwards was active in supporting it. Strictly temperate himself, he did not believe that temptations to intemperance should be licensed by the State. He represented Gates County several times in the Legislalture, was Democratic presidential elector in 1892, was delegate to many of the conventions of the Democratic Party, State and National, and was president of the Bank of Gates, a prosperous institution, from its formation to the day of his death.

But I would speak of him specially as a lawyer. He came to the bar, as before stated, after thorough academic training. There was but little litigation in the county at the time, and he had small opportunity, until he was called to larger fields, to develop his legal capacity; but he was at once recognized as a lawyer of ability, who, when he had entered into litigation, developed every point in his case to the fullest extent. No man was ever more devoted to his clients or more loyal to their interest. He never gave up, and when others thought he was vanquished and his cause lost, his fight had just begun, and frequently he would evolve some question in his case, which

had not yet appeared, and triumph at last. When he undertook a case he knew no abatement in its advocacy until the final court had settled the matter beyond controversy. He belonged to the older school of lawyers, and belived it was his duty to accept the cases of litigants when brought to him, and when once accepted, he did all that could be done for them; but he was never charged with conduct that was questionable or with an effort to manipulate and distort the law or the evidence in the service of his clients. Such a lawyer must needs have a large number of clients and appear in many important cases. He was trusted by his clients and maintained the respect always of those against whom he appeared.

Mr. Smith's family life was ideal. In 1876 he married Miss Edla Norfleet, a young woman of his own county whom he had known all his life. Mrs. Smith survives him, together with three daughters, Epia Duncan, wife of Rev. M. T. Plyler; Eliza Norfleet, now Mrs. R. R. Taylor; and Miss May Edla Smith. Mr. Smith died suddenly and, as befitted his pious life, while he was engaged in his daily devotions, before retiring for the night.

As a man, he was true to himself—

> "And it must follow, as the night the day,
> He could not then be false to any man."

SUCCESS OR FAILURE

AN ORATION

BY

LEROY LEE SMITH

SUCCESS OR FAILURE—AN ORATION*

One of the saddest facts connected with human life is that it is so seldom judged correctly. For, while apparent worth is valued too highly, and vice in a false garb is praised to the skies, real merit is often unrewarded, and genuine virtue is frequently unappreciated. This has been so in every stage of the world's history. It was so when the superstition of Aristophanes overcame the philosophy of Socrates; it was so when Barabbas, the robber, was preferred to Christ, the Savior; it was so when the tyranny of Henry VIII. triumphed, for a while, over the integrity of Sir Thomas Moore, and it is so, if the glory of Grant obscures the memory of Lee. It affords, however, some consolation to know that the judgments of Eternity may reverse the decisions of Time. For I have seen upon the sea of life the proud ship, with its sails spread by the passing breeze, look down with scorn upon the little boat struggling by its side, uncared for and unknown. But when in the midst of a storm that pompous craft, with-

*This, his graduating speech at Randolph-Macon College, is given a place because of its value in illustrating the dominant convictions of young Smith; and it also displays the leading elements that bore rule in his later life.

out any fixed purpose to steer it onward, shall sink into ruin and disgrace, that modest little bark, whose motto while tugging through the waves of adversity was "Devotion to duty," flaunting its banner of success in the very face of the tempest, shall float safely into the haven of rest and peace.

But with regard to this life, also, this subject is worth our attention. It is proper, therefore, at this point, to consider the import of these words, *Success* and *Failure;* for to everything that ever existed upon the face of the globe one or the other of them may be properly applied. The physical world has its successes and its failures. The fixed star for countless ages may roll on in its course, or it may, perchance, in a moment of time, be hurled from its orbit into the immensity of space. The masterpieces of man's handiwork, from age to age, as monuments of his skill and genius, may stand in their perfection, or they in the prime of their glory may, by the hurricane's blasts or by the earthquake's throes, be shattered into ruins. The growing crop and the feeding flock may, with favorable seasons, well repay the labor and the care of the husbandman, or, when the floods burst the river's bank, they may be swept down

the angry current. The little bird, during its brief lifetime, may sing its modest praise unharmed, or, simultaneous with its maiden song may be heard the report of a gun—and its notes of joy are hushed forever. The tiny flower may bud and blossom, shed its fragrance all around, droop and die in its own good time, or it may, perchance, in its freshest bloom be upturned by the cruel ploughshare—its beauty marred, its sweetness gone. "And thou who mournest the daisy's fate may live out your three-score years and ten, and crown, with the reward of honor, a life of usefulness, or—

> "Stern Ruin's ploughshare *may* drive elate
> Full on thy bloom,
> Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
> Shall be thy doom."

But these are neither virtuous successes nor responsible failures; for it is only when we approach the intellectual and the moral world that failure falls to the ignominy of a shame, and that success rises to the dignity of a glory. It is here that mankind may assert their freedom or bewail their servitude; may succeed by an honest effort or fail for the lack of an honorable purpose. In this respect, then, the

subject very naturally develops itself into three distinct propositions:

Failure—the want of a good purpose.

Success—devotion to duty.

Between these, no compromise.

First, failure means the want of a good purpose. It is very evident that the simplest action of the human body is ordered and directed by the Will; that man, of his own accord, seldom moves a single one of his limbs without first having a purpose to do so. Thus the will acts as lord and master over all the parts of the physical frame, and saith unto that one, "Go," and he goeth, and unto this one, "Do this," and he doeth it. But as it directs the members of the body so must it control, also, the faculties of the mind; for without some such stimulant, human industry changes to idleness and human energies lapse into indolence. In proof of this, we have but to look at the operations of the mind itself. From this we will perceive that many failures, apparently from a lack of capacity, may be attributed directly to the want of purpose. For instance, let any one, however feeble in intellect, recall to himself any mental failure he may have made: he will find that in every instance he began to fail in his undertaking only when his purpose began to fail;

that his mind then wavered and wandered until the failure was complete. It is as if a man were in the midst of a dense forest, in midnight darkness, and a black fog like a mantle of death overspread him and hid from his vision the canopy of heaven. But with all these gloomy surroundings one means of safety appears; for with his eyes fixed steadfastly before him, peering through the mist he beholds a gleam of light. To reach this is now his aim; and heedless of the difficulties that surround him and of the thorns that lacerate his flesh, he presses on bravely and successfully. But in an evil hour he loses sight of his guiding star, and again gropes about in darkness, until at last he sinks down into doubt and despair, or vainly chases the present but ever-vanishing fireflies of hope that flit around him.

Now, a purpose may be general or particular; and the same principle holds good in either case; for without a particular purpose no one can accomplish any special work, and without a general purpose no one can realize, as a whole, a successful life. But how many there are without a purpose of either kind! and alas! just so many failures. The world is full of them, leading miscellaneous lives; without any aim; without any noble aspiration: like rough

countrymen in a large city, borne by the multitude down the crowded street, not knowing whither they go, nor stopping to ask themselves the state of their surroundings, but forced along merely by the pressure of the crowd; or, perhaps, more like the floating seaweed or the drifting wood, carried hither and thither by the tides, for a while the sport of the waves, and finally cast upon the shore, whereon accumulates the rubbish of the world. How sad it is to see those who were dandled upon the lap of Virtue, and brought up under the care of Wisdom, thus to blight the fond hopes of parents, to render their lives useless to humanity, and to bring to naught their own immortal powers! But the history of the human race often presents this sad spectacle; for seed often spring up and flourish for a while which, because they have no deepness of earth, and no root, soon wither away.

Still worse, moreover, are those failures resulting not from a lack of purpose, but from the thorough carrying out of a purpose ill-conceived and ill-directed. These are they that have gone through fire and smoke, and have become famous through the shouts of the admiring multitude. These are they that pass for gold

because they glitter, and that, while modest worth is swept by as naught, receive the worship of millions. But analyze their lives, and see of what they are composed. You find there not one ounce of pure human sympathy, not one grain of commmon generosity, not one pennyweight of genuine charity, and not a single "scruple of conscience." Nothing but selfishness! selfishness! selfishness! It may be some will say, they have done many wonderful works, and why call them failures? Because they have lived for themselves; have worshiped no other god but Ambition, and have neither sought to lessen human misery nor to increase human happiness. They have lived for their own notoriety and upon others' woes; and hence we call them failures.

Thus we see that failure, whether in lives that are mere ciphers or in lives that are apparently great, alike results from the lack of a good purpose.

But this is only the dark side of the picture; and as there is a sweet for every bitter, a good for every evil, a pleasing thought for every gloomy reflection, a silver lining to every cloud, so in contrast with this picture of human weakness and human meanness, there is a picture more pleasing to the eye, a picture that contains

the scarred but manly faces of life's true heroes; and its framework is decked with the emblems of their battles and with the trophies of their victories. But to win a place among this group requires something more than the mere formation of a good purpose; for this is only to avoid failure, is only to place one in a position whence he may arise to eminent success or may fall again into ruinous failure. The Indian mother may snatch her babe from the burning prairie and, carrying it afar off, leave it in a place of supposed safety; but the flames in their fury may spread until the child becomes a victim of their ragings. The wrecked mariner, by dint of his life-and-death struggles with the angry waves, may at last reach the shore, and, wearied and worn-out, stretch himself upon the ground and hope for better things. But, alas! in vain; for now a great swelling sea, with its watery volume high in air, sweeps the shore and hurls him again into the wide waste of waters. Thus a man with a good purpose has only partially succeeded; for if he stop here the fierce flames of his own passions will consume him or the stormy waves of the world without will close over him forever. But let him consecrate this good purpose to Duty, and

he stands as high and as securely as the everlasting hills themselves.

Hence, success means *Devotion* to *Duty*.

The strict application of this principle would reverse the present order of things, but it is easily proved to be founded upon principles of justice and reason; for when we remember that life is judged by its effect upon itself and upon those around it; when we bear in mind that contentment is its subjective end, and that usefulness should be its objective aim; when our own experiences teach us that the only times of true contentment, the only real oases on the desert of life are those periods in our history when we have a consciousness of duty done, and when our observations show to us that the most dutiful are at the same time the most useful lives—then we necessarily conclude, whether the world say so or not, that *devotion to duty is success*.

But if this be true, what becomes of the fancied notion that success is measured by the heights of place and power? Of what worth is the idea that there are no gems but those that sparkle in palaces; no flowers but those that bloom on the highways? Instead of that, there are many gems in the unseen depths; and there are many flowers, too, that spring up unnoticed

and apparently waste themselves away. But *nowhere* do the flowers of truth and virtue bloom for naught; for, however hidden their location, they give out their perfume and help to sweeten the moral atmosphere of the world.

Success, then, is not confined to the highest positions. It is one of the most unjust things in the world that a man's success is judged by the position he *pretends* to fill instead of by the position he *fills*. The true principle, therefore, lies in the perfection of conception. What if our position be not of the highest rank! It is just as important that it be well filled as that of the most exalted genius of the world. The stunted shrubbery and the slender sapling are just as essential in the landscape as is the giant tree of the forest. The nebulæ that speck the sky with their pale gleam contribute to the general beauty of a mighty scene as well as does the moon that gladdens the world with her chaste beams of silvery light. The little rivulet that runs through the farmyard, watering the flocks and bedewing the meadows, is just as useful, in its place, as the mighty river that bears upon its bosom the commerce of a continent. So in life the lowest position forms an essential part of a great whole; and he that fills it acts his part, as well as he that fills the highest. In the great

battle of life we cannot all be generals; we cannot all take the battle-flag and lead to victory. But every position, from that of drummer-boy to that of commander-in-chief, must be filled.

Nor is success always accompanied with display. We are very apt to judge a man by the fuss he makes in the world. But this is by no means a good criterion; for some men go through the world like a peacock with his feathers spread, exclaiming: "Behold! and admire!" and men—and especially women—very often do behold and admire—nothing but "fuss and feathers."

Others, however, with more show of works have really attained to a wonderful degree of eminence. Some historian has well said that "The magnificence of power depends in a great degree upon the manner in which that power has been obtained." But in spite of this simple truth, these men are held up as models of greatness, and while their characters very often would bear no more rigid inspection than those of convicted felons, they are preached from the pulpit as noble exemples to rising generations.

Now, there really ought to be a distinction betweeen those who act from a sense of duty and those who work for their own advancement; and, independent of the world's opinion, and bearing in mind the law of adaptation, let us see if we cannot find that distinction. Take, for instance,

the case of the warrior. For what is he intended? To protect in time of need the interests of his country. Who, then, succeeds—he that fights for patriotism, or he that fights for conquest, for ambition, for revenge? Did Alexander succeed because he conquered the world? Did Cæsar succeed because he ruled, by dint of his sword, imperial Rome? What! is it success for a man to win applause at the expense of those who worship him? Is it success to deluge a land in blood? Is it success to fill a country with widows and orphans, and to destroy the very bread that saves them from starvation? The wails of widowhood and the cries of the orphaned say "No!" But the history of the world gives many instances in which *cruel war,* involving the lives of thousands, and the property of millions more, has been set on foot, whose only object was to allow some ambitious leader to ascend, upon the dead bodies of heroic soldiery, the heights of worldly grandeur, and to write with the blood of his countrymen his name upon their highest pinnacle.

In contemplating such scenes we involuntarily exclaim, with the dramatic poet:

"Is there not some chosen curse,
Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?"

Yet such men have their worshipers. But the successful hero, in his country's need, braves the storm of battle, and when the clouds of war have passed over, he drives the ship of State through dangers unseen, or leads the youth of his land to a higher and nobler life, and thus wins the first place in the hearts of his countrymen.

But what has been said of the warrior may be said of men in every walk of life. The laborer who performs a mere eye service; the teacher who, instead of teaching, displays what he knows; the lawyer who for profit stirs up strife among his neighbors; the statesman who subordinates country to party; the preacher who pleases his hearers at the expense of their souls; these, all these, are miserable failures. How often is it, then, that a modest, blushing woman, unknown, perhaps, beyond the sweet associations of her own home, has led a life more glorious in its activity and more fruitful in its results than that of many men whose praises have made multitudes hoarse!

Thus it is that the very stars of heaven are often hid by a brilliant display of fireworks. When the dynasty of the proud Cæsars swayed the world, and the splendor of external Rome dazzled the eyes of humanity, down in the dark recesses of her catacombs, shut out from the

light of heaven and from the observation of the world, a few earnest men were sowing the early seeds of Christianity. And while all that splendor has faded, withered, and decayed into the fossilized remains of antiquity, those seeds have sprung up, blossomed, and ripened into the fruits of modern civilization. While from the one must be removed the dust of oblivion in order to see even its *corpse,* the other, as clear as the noonday sun, stands out as the grandest *living* reality of the world. Thus has it been in all ages; for wherever pride and haughtiness have reigned supreme, wherever falsehood and error bearing universal sway have stalked through the earth, then some unknown spirit, operating by the laws that determine success, would arise and clear away the mists of superstition and the clouds of vice. Even today, when the philosophers and scientists are playing their antic tricks before the gaze of a novel-loving world, a few sheltered souls are silently but surely winning upward way, and, preceded by their works, will at last rise up and proclaim the progress of the Truth and the triumph of the Right.

Now, throwing aside these false notions that position and display determine success, we can see more clearly what *does* determine it. Every

man is or may be fitted to fill some position in life. To find this position and to discharge its obligations constitute a successful career. To do this, every man has the elements within him; for, if he be not gifted, he may substitute industry for talents and resolution for genius. Natural gifts, however, should not be despised; but, after all, it is but the old parable of the talents; and the great questions is not how many may be given, but in what manner must they be used. This question time and again has been answered by the lives of the great and the good. But what are the lives of the great and the good? What peculiar charm have they that has given the names of "great" and "good" to those that have lived them? They are lives directed throughout by an unwavering purpose and governed altogether by an unflinching devotion to duty; for when these conditions are fulfilled, success is certain. The ship upon her voyage encounters a storm, and, by some local attraction, the compass fails to give its wonted sign. But let the helmsman drive her on as best he may. These dangers are soon passed, the needle again points to the pole, and the ship reaches in safety her destined port. The little drop of water formed in the crevices of the rock has a destiny; and it trickles from the mountain-side and falls splash-

ing and wasting upon the rocks below; but it reforms itself, and, joining with other drops, falls again and again, until at length the brooklet goes dashing along its zigzag course, overriding some impediments and dodging others, but gathering new strength as it flows, ever becoming straighter, wider, deeper, until finally the majestic river, sweeping every obstruction before it, flows noiselessly but boldly on to the sea—and the drop of water has reached its destiny. So a purpose may be formed far back in youth, so small at first that it is often thwarted and turned from its course; but, upheld by Duty, it still grows and strengthens, meeting difficulties on the way, sometimes conquered, sometimes conquering, until at last the purpose, withstanding all opposition, becomes a fixed principle of life—and the man has filled his destiny.

I have more than once looked upon a certain old man with a feeling akin to envy, when I beheld him, a conqueror; for, like the warrior who having planned the battle and having seen his orders bravely executed, while yet may be heard the clash of arms and the booming of the cannon and while his face is still covered with the dust and the smoke of the fight, stands and looks on with the proud satisfaction that his

banner is borne in triumph and that he is master of the situation, so this bold warrior in life's great battle had planned it with a purpose, and had executed it with grave endeavors, prompted by duty's call; and now, while the last stray shot of the retreating foe are whistling around him, he still maintains his position, in spite of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. There is something touching in lives of this sort, whether passed in modesty or spent in grandeur; for towards their close, swan-like, they send forth a song; and to their praise the essence of suppressed music echoes through the ages. The poor Tabitha lived without friends or kindred, and the world little knew what she was doing; but when she died the poor neighboring widows, sorrow-stricken, sent for Peter, and, holding up before his eyes the garments made by her hands and presented by her charity, bore witness that her life was worth restoring.

The modern Livingston, urged on by a purpose and supported by duty, plunged into the wilds of Africa. Forgetting the world—the world in turn forgetting him—he went along his lonely pathway; but when he died, with all due honors he found a last resting-place among England's great. But the result of his travels and

his labors to the good of Science, of Civilization, and of Christianity, time alone can estimate.

But the most practical question for us to consider is that there is no compromise between *Success* and *Failure.*

I do not say, without a good purpose and without acting altogether from a sense of duty, that a man cannot be rich, famous, or useful. But I do say that only that part of human life that is directed by duty is really worthy of praise; and allowing every man to be his own judge, the same decision will be given. Many lives prove this. Take, for instance, the life of Lord Bacon. We see him first as an office-seeker, cringing to royalty; as judge, foully staining his judicial robes and degrading mankind. But when he seeks something nobler than self, and fain would worship Truth, we see him then the earnest, whole-souled philosopher, honoring his race and blessing the world. Dickens did not always practice those domestic virtues that he taught so earnestly. But in spite of this, devotion to duty secured his success; for he saw social evils throughout his own dear England and felt it to be his duty to resist them. This aim nerved his energies and fired his soul, and today his works are the joy of millions.

But, when applied to a whole life, the contrast between success and failure becomes

greater still. The line here is drawn, not between fragments of individual lives, but it divides the human race into two divisions. This is the history of the world: men live and die; some do their duty, others do not; some succeed, others fail.

We have seen that failure results from the lack of a good purpose; that success flows from devotion to duty, and that there is no compromise between them. Now, in application, the question is, Which will we choose? The one on the other must mark us for its own. But that remains for us to decide. To you especially, fellow-students, in taking my last farewell of you, let me say one word. From you, among whom I have formed some of the dearest ties that ever linked the hearts of spontaneous friends together—from you, it is sad indeed to part. But we must, ere long, be scattered over the world; and then many of our youthful hopes and aspirations, like bubbles, shall burst into thin air; many pleasant scenes of college life in the outer world will be reversed; and shadows will become lights, and lights shadows. We shall meet with reverses where we little expect them; but we may live to some good end. For those of us who are just about entering upon life it is especially important that we choose this day whom we will serve. Let us remember, too, to

adapt ourselves to the times in which we live; and the present above all others is the time when true heroism, true courage, and true virtue are demanded of the youth of this land. Let us do *something* under the inspiration of duty that will be of some use to the world. But why make fragments of our lives? Better, far better, to let them be as a unit on the side of success; for the demands of the times call imperatively upon each one of us to be every whit a man. Therefore in the name of all that's true, beautiful, and good, let us *be men;* then, parted and scattered though we be, we will nevertheless fill our mission, and beyond the river, under the shade of the trees, we shall meet again amid rejoicings and congratulations over one another's successes; for the fulfillment of the conditions named will lead us, step by step, through the Christian graves up into the Christian's Home. You may call this preaching, if you please, but let us not allow a morbid taste to clip the wings of Truth, but, rather, let her dip, unscathed, into the lowest depths, and then, with wings outspread, soar aloft unto her everlasting dwelling-place. Hear, then, the conclusion of the whole matter: *Success* or *Failure*—there is no other alternative—which will you choose? Failure is hell; success is heaven, forever and forever.

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