

A Man for the Ages

A Story of the Builders of Democracy

By Irving Bacheller

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CHAPTER III.

Wherein the Reader is Introduced to Offut's Store and His Clerk Abe, and the Scholar Jack Kelso and His Cabin and His Daughter Bim, and Gets a First Look at Lincoln.

They had a dinner of prairie chickens and roast venison, flavored with wild grape jelly, and creamed potatoes and cookies and doughnuts and raisin pie. It was a well-cooked dinner, served on white linen, in a clean room, and while they were eating, the sympathetic landlady stood by the table, eager to learn of their travels and to make them feel at home. The good food and their kindly welcome and the beauty of the rolling, wooded prairies softened the regret which had been growing in their hearts, and which only the children had dared to express.

"Perhaps we haven't made a mistake, after all," Sarah whispered when the dinner was over. "I like these people and the prairies are beautiful."

"It is the land of plenty at last," said Samson, as they came out of doors. "It is even better than I thought."

"As Douglas Jerrold said of Australia: 'Tickle it with a hoe and it laughs with a harvest,'" said Dr. Allen, who still sat in the shaded dooryard, smoking his pipe. "I have an extra horse and saddle. Suppose you leave the family with Mrs. Rutledge and ride around with me a little this afternoon. I can show you how the land lies off to the west of us, and tomorrow we'll look at the other side."

"Thank you—I want to look around here a little," said Samson. "What's the name of this place?"

"New Salem. We call it a village. It has a mill, a carding machine, a tavern, a schoolhouse, five stores, fourteen houses, two or three men of genius, and a roly dam. It's a crude but growing place and soon it will have all the embellishments of civilized life."

That evening many of the inhabitants of the little village came to the tavern to see the travelers and were introduced by Dr. Allen. Most of them had come from Kentucky, although there were two Yankee families who had moved on from Ohio.

"These are good folks," said the doctor. "There are others who are not so good. I could show you some pretty rough customers at Clary's Grove, not far from here. We have to take things as they are and do our best to make 'em better."

"Any Indians?" Sarah asked.

"You see one now and then, but they're peaceable. Most of 'em have gone with the buffaloes—farther west. Now and then a circuit rider gets here and preaches to us. You'll hear the Reverend Stephen Nuckles if you settle in these parts. He can holler louder than any man in the state."

The tavern was the only house in New Salem with stairs in it—stairs so steep, as Samson writes, that they were first cousins to the ladder. There were four small rooms above them. Two of these were separated by a partition of cloth hanging from the rafters. In each was a bed and bedstead and smaller beds on the floor. In case there were a number of adult guests the bedstead was screened with sheets hung upon strings. In one of these rooms the travelers had a night of refreshing sleep.

After riding two days with the doctor, Samson bought the claim of one Isaac Gollaher to a half section of land a little more than a mile from the western end of the village. He chose a site for his house on the edge of an open prairie.

tobacco, muscovado sugar and molasses. There was a counter on each side. Bolts of cloth, mostly calico, were piled on the far end of the right counter as one entered and the near end held a showcase containing a display of cutlery, pewter spoons, jewelry and fishing tackle. There were double windows on either side of the rough board door with its wooden latch. The left counter held a case filled with threads, buttons, combs, colored ribbons, and belts and jew's-harps. A balance stood in the middle of this counter. A chest of tea, a big brown jug, a box of candles, a keg and a large wooden pail occupied its farther end. The shelving on its side walls was filled by straw hats, plug tobacco, bolts of cloth, pills and patent medicines and paste-board boxes containing shirts, handkerchiefs and underwear. At the rear end of the store was a large fireplace. There were two chairs near the fireplace, both of which were occupied by a man who sat in one while his feet lay on the other. He wore a calico shirt with a fanciful design of morning-glories on it printed in appropriate colors, a collar of the same material and a red necktie.

Abe laid aside his book and rose to a sitting posture.

"Pardon me—you see the firm is busy," said Abe. "You know Eb Zane



"Pardon Me—You See the Firm is Busy."

used to say that he was never so busy in his life as when he lay on his back with a broken leg. He said he had to work twenty-four hours a day doin' nothin' an' could never get an hour off. But a broken leg is not so bad as a lame intellect. That lays you out with the fever an' ague of ignorance. Jack Kelso recommended Kirkham's pills and poultices of poetry. I'm trying both and slowly getting the better of it. I've learned three conjugations, between customers, this afternoon."

The sleeper, whose name was William Berry, rose and stretched himself and was introduced to the newcomer. He was a shaggy, genial man, of some thirty years, with blonde, curly hair and mustache. His fat cheeks had a color as definite as that of the blossoms on his shirt, now rather soiled. His prominent nose shared their glow of ruddy opulence. His gray eyes wore a look of apology.

"Mr. Traylor, this is Mr. William Berry," said Dr. Allen. "Mr. Traylor has just acquired an interest in all our institutions. He has bought the Gollaher tract and is going to build a house and some fences. Abe, couldn't you help get the timber out in a hurry so we can have a raising within a week? You know the arts of the ax better than any of us."

Abe looked at Samson.

"I reckon he and I would make a good team with the ax," he said. "He looks as if he could push a house down with one hand and build it up with the other. You can bet I'll be glad to help in any way I can."

"We'll all turn in and help. I should think Bill or Jack Kelso could look after the store for a few days," said the doctor. "I promised to take Mr. Traylor over to Jack Kelso's tonight. Couldn't you come along?"

"Good! We'll have a story-tellin' and get Jack to unlimber his guns," said Abe.

Jack Kelso's cabin, one of two which stood close together at the western end of the village, was lighted by the cheery blaze of dry logs in its fireplace. There were guns on a rack over the fireplace under a buck's head, a powder horn hanging near them on its string looped over a nail. There were wolf and deer and bear pelts on the floor. The skins of foxes, raccoons and wildcats adorned the log walls. Jack Kelso was a blond, smooth-faced, good-looking, merry-hearted Scot, about forty years old, of a rather slight build, some five feet, eight inches tall. That is all that any one knew of him save that he spent most of his time hunting and fishing and seemed to have all the best things, which great men had

said to be written, on the tip of his tongue.

"Welcome! and here's the best seat at the fireside," he said to Samson. "My wife and daughter are away for a visit and for two days I've had the cabin to myself. Look, ye worshippers of fire, and see how fine it is now! The homely cabin is a place of beauty. What a heaven it is when the flames are leaping! Here is Hogarth's line of beauty; nothing perpendicular or horizontal."

He took Abe's hand and went on: "Here, ye lovers of romance, is one of the story-tellers of Ispahan who has in him the wisdom of the wandering tribes. He can tell you a tale that will draw children from their play and old men from the chimney corner. My boy, take a chair next to Mr. Traylor. Mr. Traylor, you stand up as proud and firm as a big pine. I believe you're a Yankee."

"So do I," said Samson. "If you took all the Yankee out o' me I'd have an empty skin."

Then Abe began to show the stranger his peculiar art in these words: "Stephen Nuckles used to say: 'God's grace embraces the isles o' the sea an' the uttermost parts o' the earth. It takes in the Esquimaux an' the Hottentots. Some go so far to say that it takes in the Yankees but I don't go so far.'"

Samson joined in the good-natured laughter that followed.

"If you deal with some Yankees you take your life in your hands," he said. "They can serve God or Mammon and I guess they have given the devil some of his best ideas. He seems to be getting a lot of Yankee notions lately."

"There was a powerful prejudice in Kentucky against the Yankees," Abe went on. "Down there they used to tell about a Yankee who sold his hogs and was driving them to town. On the way he decided that he had sold them too cheap. He left them with his drover in the road and went on to town and told the buyer that he would need help to bring 'em in."

"How's that?" the buyer asked.

"Why they git away an' go to runnin' through the woods an' fields an' we can't keep up with 'em."

"I don't think I want 'em," says the buyer. "A speedy hog hasn't much pork to carry. I'll give ye twenty bits to let me off."

"I guess that Yankee had one more hog than he'd counted," said Samson. "Whatever prejudice you may find here will soon vanish," said Kelso, turning to the newcomer. "I have great respect for the sturdy sons of New England. I believe it was Theodore Parker who said that the pine was the symbol of their character. He was right. Its roots are deep in the soil; it towers above the forest; it has the strength of tall masts and the substance of the bulwark in its body, music in its waving branches and turpentine in its veins. I thought of this when I saw Webster and heard him speak at Plymouth."

"What kind of a looking man is he?" Abe asked.

"A big erect, splendid figure of a man. He walked like a ram at the head of his flock."

Abe who since his story had sat with a sad face looking into the fire now leaned forward, his elbows on his knees, and shook his head with interest while his gray eyes took on a look of animation. The diary speaks often of the "veil of sadness" on his face.

"He is a very great man," Abe exclaimed.



Began to Speak the Lines in a High-Pitched Voice.

"Surely—there are so many of us who hate it. These Yankees hate it and they and their children are scattering all over the midlands. Their spirit will guide the West. The love of liberty is the salt of their blood and the marrow of their bones. Liberty means freedom for all. Wait until these babies, coming out here by the wagonload, have grown to manhood. Slavery will have to reckon with them."

"I hate it, too," said Abe. "If I live I'm going to hit that thing on the head some day."

"Do you still want to be a lawyer?" Kelso asked.

"Yes, but sometimes I think I'd make a better blacksmith," said Abe. "I'm trying to make up my mind what's best for me."

"No, you're trying to decide what is best for your friends and your country and for the reign of law and justice and liberty."

"But I think every man acts from selfish motives," Abe insisted.

Doctor Allen demurred as follows: "The other night you happened to remember that you had overcharged Mrs. Peters for a jug of molasses and after you had closed the store you walked three miles to return the money which belonged to her. Why did you do it?"

"For a selfish motive," said Abe. "I believe honesty is the best policy."

"Then you took that long walk just to advertise your honesty—to induce people to call you 'Honest Abe' as they have begun to do?"

"I wouldn't want to put it that way," said Abe.

"But that's the only way out," the doctor insisted, "and we knowing ones would have to call you 'Sordid Abe.'"

"There's a hidden Abe and you haven't got acquainted with him yet," Kelso interposed. "We have all caught a glimpse of him tonight. He's the Abe that loves honor and justice and humanity and their great temple of freedom that is growing up here in the new world. He loves them better than fame or fortune or life itself. I think it must have been that Abe whose voice sounded like a trumpet just now and who sent you off to Mrs. Peters with the money. You haven't the chance to know him that we have. Some day you two will get acquainted."

and leaped out of the large wicker basket it had covered. With a merry laugh she threw her arms around Jack Kelso's neck and kissed him.

The men clapped their hands in noisy merriment.

"That's like Bim, isn't it?" said the doctor.

"Exactly!" Abe exclaimed.

"I stop at David Barney's an' dere she took de goods out o' my pack an' fix up dis job lot fer you," said Eli with a laugh.

"A real surprise party!" the girl exclaimed.

She was a small-sized girl, nearing sixteen, with red cheeks and hazel eyes and blonde hair that fell in curls upon her shoulders.

"Mr. Traylor, this is my daughter Bim," said Kelso. "She is skilled in the art of producing astonishment."

"She must have heard of that handsome boy at the tavern and got in a hurry to come home," said the doctor.

"Ann Rutledge says that he is a right party boy," the girl laughed as she brushed her curls aside.

(To be continued.)

LOCKED HOURS IN BANK VAULT

Clerk Rescued in Unconscious Condition Is Revived by Pulmotor.

GOES TO THE MOVIES

When Questioned by His Parents Denies Thrilling Experience in Which He Was Near Death From Asphyxiation.

New York.—Locked in an air-tight steel vault far below the street level in the Metropolitan building, Twenty-third street and Fourth avenue, for nearly two hours, Frederick J. Schweer, Jr., a clerk in the Metropolitan bank, was rescued just in time to save his life. The boy was unconscious when lifted out. An ambulance surgeon from Bellevue hospital, who had been waiting more than an hour with a pulmotor, began work on him.

The lad, suffering when he first revived, from shock and hysteria, made such a rapid recovery that after he reached his home at 169 Chestnut avenue, Jersey City, he ate a belated supper and hurried out to the movie without telling his parents of his thrilling experience. And when he came back he stubbornly denied that he had been in the vault at all.

Watchman Hears Tapping. It was just before seven o'clock that John Connolly, the bank watchman making his rounds on the subway level, heard a steady tap, tap, tap at the door of a big vault used for the safekeeping of books and records. At first Connolly thought some one was trying to break in. Then he became sure it was some one trying to break out and dashed for a telephone.

August C. Corby, second vice president and cashier of the bank, was just entering his home, 215 West One Hundred and First street, when he got the watchman's hurry call. Corby was the nearest official who knew the combination. His automobile was outside and he broke all traffic regulations getting to the bank.

Connolly meantime had notified Patrolman Darcy of the East Twenty-second street station, on nearby post, and Darcy had summoned Doctor MacMannus with the pulmotor.

There was some delay in getting the vault open, which was not explained.

Schweer was suffering from asphyxiation and his respiration had diminished to the danger point. In a few minutes his breathing became normal. The deep shock of his experience became apparent the moment he regained consciousness, but once he was convinced that nothing more than a hideous dream remained of his harrowing experience he soon got hold of himself.

Because of efforts made to prevent the occurrence from becoming public, it was not learned just how Schweer became imprisoned. It was said that while he was putting some books away the door was shut "in some manner." Nor could it be learned precisely how long the boy had been there. Those who participated in his rescue and revival were certain it was two hours, if not longer.

Taxes of the Nations.

The tax burden in important countries was computed for the financial conference held at Brussels. Expressed in dollars at the rate of exchange current in the summer, the Nation's Business states, it is shown that per capita the United Kingdom pays the highest taxes of \$57.90; the United States is second, with \$56.90; France, third, with \$34.80; and Norway, fourth, with \$28.80.

With the income per capita, the economists compared the present government revenue of the latter to the former—which comes nearest to showing the relative burdens of taxes today—is lowest in the United States at 8 per cent and highest in the United Kingdom at 27 per cent. The other countries come in between.

The Cooties.

Colonel Roosevelt told a war story at an Albany reception.

"A doughboy," he said, "had just got back home from the war, and he was lurching in a cafeteria when a dear old lady in the next chair to his own leaned over across her plate and said:

"I, too, have a soldier son, young man, and a lucky one at that. Would you believe it? My boy went through the war without a scratch."

"Gee, lady," said the doughboy, "spill us the name of his insect powder, will ye?"

MARVELOUS IS HUMAN BRAIN

Many Millions of Nerve Cells Make Up the Mind Which Controls the Body's Movements.

The highest product of evolution is undoubtedly the human brain. This is the seat of the mind—and, so far as it can be said to have a seat, of the soul, also. Filling the great cavity of the skull is the cerebrum, thrown into many folds or so-called "convolutions." This matter is gray on the outside and white toward the center. It is in the gray matter, composed of millions upon millions of nerve cells, connected one with another, that higher thought—reasoning, association, memory, etc., go on. In the brain there are certain sensory centers which record the senses of sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch. There are also certain "areas" or parts of the brain which move various parts of the body and these are the so-called "motor areas."

The anatomy of the brain has been carried to such a fine degree of knowledge that we are now enabled to put our finger upon a certain spot in the brain and say, "This group (or group) of cells moves the little toe on the left foot," or whatever it may be. Every movement in the body is controlled by these centers, either in the brain or by the nerves which branch out from the spinal cord. All activities of the body, however, other than those initiated by the brain, are unconscious.

—Hereward Carrington, in Leslie's.

How She Proposes.

Women do propose though they do not say outright. "Jack, I love you! Will you please be my husband?" They sometimes do as did Alice and her friend Fred. They had been singing, and Alice searched through the music till she found a song entitled, "I am in love with you." Handing it to Fred she said, "Do you know it?" Fred looked stunned, and ignoring the song she held out to him, he said, "No, I didn't know it, but I certainly am glad to hear you say so." And shortly Alice was wearing an engagement ring. But sometimes it works the other way. A young man was taking a girl home on a beautiful moonlight evening. Looking into his eyes she said, "Er—I'm not going to get married until you do." He asked why, and she replied "Because so long as you are single there is hope." But alas he took her home and left her there and never saw her again!

War Department Is to Take Half of Total Government Budget for Next Year.

Belgrade, Yugoslavia.—The war department of the new kingdom of Yugoslavia will cost 2,000,000,000 dinars, one-half the government's total budget, in the next fiscal year, despite vigorous efforts by the minister of finance to reduce expenses. This is a reduction of 500,000,000 dinars from the estimates asked for by the war ministry.

The total budget estimates were 6,000,000,000 dinars but this has been reduced to 4,000,000,000. The nominal exchange value of a dinar is about 19 cents but at the present rate it is worth about three cents.

Near Danger Point. Doctor MacMannus administered respirators and applied the pulmotor as



The Huddled Form of the Boy.

and long before the huge doors swung outward all sounds had ceased within. The huddled form of the boy, his face pressed close against the doors, was dragged out by the policemen and the ambulance surgeon.

Suddenly there was a lively stir in it. To the amazement of all a beautiful girl threw aside the ticking