

## Some Self-made Indianians

OF the Indianians whose names are identified with the State's history an interesting proportion has been composed of "self-made men," if by that definition we mean those that started as poor boys and, without any aid or opportunities other than what they created by their own efforts, made their way to the front.

Of the twenty-five men, from Jennings to Hanley, who have occupied the Governor's office, at least one-third may be fairly considered as coming within this category. Ratliff Boone, our second chief magistrate, was a pioneer boy of Kentucky, who, in lieu of going to school, took up the gunsmith's trade. Noah Noble also grew up in the wilds of Kentucky, and was largely self-taught. James Whitcomb was a farmer's son, and his portion was "hard work and coarse fare," but he borrowed books and read them and made for himself a neighborhood reputation for learning. By perseverance he fitted himself for college, and after entering school maintained himself by teaching during vacations. Joseph A. Wright was a poor boy who aspired to a college education. He entered the State University and paid his way by ringing the college bell and doing janitor's work, by toiling in a brickyard, and even by gathering nuts from the woods. He also did odd jobs of masonry, as is shown in the old college records. As an impecunious young lawyer, after leaving college, he submitted a bid for carrying the mail from Brownstown to Terre Haute, offering to do it for \$334 per annum, but he was too obscure to be considered, and a better-known man, though now utterly forgotten, got the job at \$398. Ashbel P. Willard taught school and did cheap clerical work as a stepping-stone to politics. Oliver P. Morton was of a poor family. He began life as a hatter's apprentice, and later, by frugal management, part of the time cooking his own meals in his room, succeeded in getting two years of college training. James D. Williams was reared as a pioneer farmer's boy, accustomed to hard manual labor, with but very little schooling, and throughout his life he retained the character of a sturdy, homely son of the soil, although almost continuously in the public service for nearly forty years. Isaac P. Gray, before entering public life was a dry goods clerk; Alvin P. Hovey, a brick mason; Ira J. Chase, Claude Matthews

and James A. Mount, farmers. The two last named were farmers to the end, and took pride in reckoning themselves of that class. Mr. Mount began with no capital but a pair of willing hands and a will to do, and first made himself an eminent agriculturist.

Of the men who have represented Indiana in the United States Senate a number were of the type under consideration. James Noble, like his brother Noah, was a Kentucky pioneer boy, accustomed to labor, who "grew up strong and self-reliant." John Tipton, as a young man, was a woodsman and Indian fighter, illiterate, but a man of native intelligence, a keen observer and a natural leader. Jesse D. Bright, with but little claim to education, made his way by sheer will and his unusual talent for leadership. Daniel W. Voorhees, born of pioneer parents, had his mother and himself to thank for his advancement, and the life of Albert J. Beveridge is but the old story of a success which had for its antecedent the hard and humble life of the farm.

Of those otherwise prominent in our public service many might be cited as victors over adverse conditions. James Rariden, lawyer and legislator, and one of the eminent men of the old White-water region, started with but meager schooling, and the qualifications that gave him an exceptionally high rank as a legal light were acquired in his contact with men. Charles H. Test, began as a surveyor's assistant, and while earning his livelihood at this business he read law at odd hours and by the the time he was twenty years old had qualified himself for admission to the bar. William W. Wick, one of the best-known of Indiana's early judges, acquired some schooling as a boy, and when eighteen years old left his home in Pennsylvania to seek his fortunes. He made his way westward by degrees, supporting himself by teaching here and there, and satisfying his thirst for knowledge as he could. He first studied medicine, then read chemistry, as he said, "principally by the light of log heaps in a clearing," and also read law "of nights and Sundays." By his twenty-fourth year he had drifted to Connersville, Indiana, and there settled himself as a practicing lawyer. John Wesley Davis, judge, legislator, foreign minister, Governor of Oregon Territory, Congressman and one of the three Indianians who have been Speaker of the House in Congress, spent his boyhood on a farm, then was bound out as an apprentice to a clock-maker.

After that he was a store-keeper, and then practiced medicine until, when thirty years old, he found his proper sphere in politics. Tilghman A. Howard, prominent in politics in this State for fourteen years, and regarded as an exceptionally able man, is said to have received about a year's schooling all told, yet when, at the age of nineteen, he left his North Carolina home to make his way in the world, the first vocation he took up was that of teaching, and his biographer tells us that although he "never attended an academy or a college, he was a very learned man. He was acquainted with the civil law, with theology, history, politics, geology, mineralogy, botany, philosophy and the occult sciences. His mind was a vast storehouse of knowledge, it being questionable if there was another man in the State of equal information." Cyrus L. Dunham, lawyer, legislator, Congressman and judge, paid for his early schooling with the money he earned working out, and later, by taking service on a fishing smack, saved enough to give himself a short course in a seminary. Michael C. Kerr, the second Indianian who was Speaker in Congress, was "mainly self-educated," and "mastered the fundamental principles of jurisprudence and political philosophy," in the knowledge of which he afterward became a master, while teaching school. Schuyler Colfax, our other Speaker in Congress, Vice-President of the United States, and Congressman, began earning his living as a store clerk at the age of ten years, and from that time made his own way. George W. Julian, well known in Indiana for half a century, was born to a lot as hard and unpromising as that of Abraham Lincoln. With an indomitable will, however, he overcame the difficulties, laboring with his hands and teaching a country school while making the most of his precious books and laying the foundations for his future public career. Walter Q. Gresham lost his father in infancy, and received but little schooling as a boy. Joseph E. McDonald, United States Senator, left the farm when twelve years old to learn the saddler's trade, and Franklin Landers and J. P. C. Shanks, prominent Indiana politicians, both hewed out their own fortunes. William A. Woods, Joseph A. S. Mitchell and Asa Iglehart, eminent jurists, were all poor boys, born to toil, who worked their way to the front by persistent effort.