

MR. JULIAN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

The subject of the foregoing "Impressions" left in the possession of his daughter, Mrs. Clark, a manuscript autobiography which affords some intimate glimpses of an interesting career. Mr. Julian's progress from the humblest estate to eminence by the sheer force of a conquering will and strong personality makes a life story that is inspiring and stimulating. When he was about six years old his father died and his mother was left, all but penniless, with a family of children to provide for. The autobiography describes the battle of life at this period as a battle *for* life. The family wrung such support as they could out of a barren farm. They wove their own cloth for the home-made garments and eked out their slender income by weaving for the neighbors, while the boys occupied the rainy days weaving straw hats. In the spring the sugar grove was made to yield sweets for their table and as much additional revenue as possible.

In such a life there was little to foster an interest in books, and small chance to gratify such an interest if aroused. Nevertheless, the interest was nourished in this family,* and the divine spark found fuel to feed upon. The MS. tells us how young George raised his first funds for the indulgence of a growing passion. "I gathered each year," it says, "a large crop of walnuts—one fall as many as sixteen bushels—and sold the hulls at Nathan Bond's carding and fulling mills, at six cents per bushel, for money with which to buy books and stationery." He attended the country school of winters, and though he speaks of himself as an unpromising dullard, yet by virtue of a "dogged perseverance" he applied himself to his studies with an assiduity that soon brought him abreast of his teachers. "I renounced," he says, "the society of my playmates and gave myself wholly to my books. My Sundays were especially set apart for study, and I was up till a late hour in the night poring over my tasks

*It should be noted that these aspirations were not confined to George. John, the eldest brother, evinced unusual endowments; Jacob became a jurist, and Isaac, still living, a journalist and writer of both prose and verse.

by the light of a fire kept up by 'kindlings,' which I regularly prepared as a substitute for the candles we could not afford."

At the age of eighteen he taught school, and was, doubtless, far more proficient than the average country teacher of that day. Having no instructor, he studied by himself, as best he could, rhetoric and logic, natural philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, mathematics and surveying, and seems to have made considerable progress in these abstruse branches. A list of his general reading, also, reveals the solidity of his acquirements. Among those enumerated are: Russell's History of Modern Europe, Hume's History of England, Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Goldsmith's histories of Greece and Rome, Plutarch's Lives, the English poets, Locke's Essays, Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers, Watts on the Mind, Combe on the Constitution of Man, Dr. Spurzheim's works on phrenology and education, Paine's political works, Godwin's Political Justice, Sterne's works, Don Quixote, Fielding's novels, Ossian's poems, etc.

Mr. Julian repeatedly speaks of an abnormal timorousness and self-distrust that seemed an almost insuperable obstacle to his advancement. The assertiveness and efficiency as a public speaker that distinguished him in later years was acquired only by the most rigorous training and persistent self-conquest. When, by the advice of a friend, he turned to the study of law, it was with so little faith that he pursued his reading secretly and half ashamed. To pass an examination and secure a license to practice was the easiest part. In the assurance necessary to the young lawyer he was utterly lacking. By way of cultivating it he hung about the courts at Centerville, trying to familiarize himself with the customs of the profession, and a little later on, after he had removed to Greenfield, he tells of a "dark lyceum"—an altogether novel institution consisting solely of himself and one other bashful young man who sought to engender courage by making speeches at each other, which forensic efforts were carried on in a dark room so as to reduce the embarrassment. By way of adding dignity and impressiveness to these meetings they were presided over by a "premier," whose duty it was to "preserve order and decide the debated questions." Each speaker, after his turn on the floor, would become the

premier and let the other descend from the chair and make his argument. The progress attained by these half ludicrous, half pathetic and wholly earnest efforts was so slight that the autobiographer is moved to speak of it as "all in vain," and he adds: "Sometimes, in my despair, I felt that I must break the chains which bound me, but I was powerless to do so, and no word of encouragement from any quarter cheered me. If I had had a single trusted friend to say to me, 'Be of courage; fear not; you can conquer,' it would have lifted a great weight from my heart and opened the pathway to my deliverance."

His first case in court is described by Mr. Julian. "It was tried," he says, "before a country justice of the peace, and N. W. Miner, of Dublin, was the opposing counsel. We were both frightened as if panic-stricken, and it now seems to me so ridiculous that I almost doubt my own recollection. The justice was a good-natured old farmer who knew less law than either of us and whose judgment of our rhetoric was quite indifferent. The amount involved was only a few dollars, and in no case could there be serious consequences to body or soul; and yet, in opening our case and making our speeches we fairly quaked with nervous fear."

Mr. Julian's career, from his entrance into politics, in 1840, is traced in his published volume, "Political Recollections." The autobiography, dealing with personal matters prior to that date, is chiefly valuable as a record of a self-made man, and as showing how such a man, gifted with native force and strong will, can, in the face of many handicaps, hew his way grimly to a place in the front ranks. Dealing with the development of a man who accomplished things, it has the germane biographical value, and if published (especially if edited with reference to matter already published) would make a desirable addition to the biographical literature of the State.

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