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SOME ELEMENTS
OF
INDIANA'S POPULATION
OR
ROADS WEST AND THEIR
EARLY TRAVELERS

BY

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SOME ELEMENTS OF INDIANA'S POPULATION

It would be as delightfully interesting as it is hopelessly difficult to trace out in detail the mixture and commingling of nationalities and hereditary tendencies that make up the present population of Indiana. Behind our complex tastes and tendencies, behind our varied industries, political theories, religious beliefs, and social views and ambitions, a hundred forces from past generations and foreign countries are manifesting their varied influences. Scores of streams have flowed from as many sources and have commingled their waters. Some are clear, crystal and brilliant, others are muddy and turbulent, carrying to this alluvial plain silt from upland and mountain to deposit here, and when our soil shall be analyzed all these sources may be more or less definitely traced. What influences, created and formulated elsewhere, may now be determining our own views would be interesting to know. What the traditions are back of our elements of composition might become the basis for valuable history or interesting fiction.

If we could go to all the older sections of the State and in these to the oldest and most intelligent citizens with a series of quizzes, we should doubtless find in detail whence came those persons and groups of persons who first peopled the present State of Indiana. To go into all these communities to make diligent inquiry as to the ancestral whereabouts of all these people is quite impossible for any one who secures a livelihood by the slow process of earning it. There seem to be no

census reports from the State indicating birthplaces of our early comers, except in a few isolated sections.

In a few counties, perhaps, directories were published early enough to give much information of this character for the locality.

Some of the county histories give us a small portion of more or less trustworthy information, but few of our counties have been fortunate enough to have such histories written. Some of the histories that have been published are not very reliable, yet it is safe to say no county history has ever been written that is not worth much more than it has cost.

Such of these histories and directories are invaluable so far as they go, but we have too few such aids to the study of our civilization. In the absence of these aids, perhaps the best source of information concerning the streams of population flowing in here is a knowledge of the great highways leading toward and into Indiana from the east and southeast. To know well the sources of all the streams that flowed into this common reservoir is the best method perhaps, of knowing the composition of its contents.

Of all the numerous influences back of us that have molded our composite character, only a few of them can even be hinted at or suggested, none of them fully traced.

Among all the influences upon mankind, perhaps no one power external to man himself has more strongly urged him in his way or out of his way than the geographic conditions around him.

The fact that the great civilizations of the world have grown in the cool temperate zones may not prove anything, but the facts force us to question whether the conditions of life do not largely control, perhaps create or destroy, our energies.

Culture and civilization have grown and must continue to grow where life is neither too easy nor too hard; where a surplus is given to non-essentials of existence—to education and culture.

The Norsemen lived in an unfriendly climate, and much of their soil was unproductive. Both nature and the law of the land drove the sons, except the first born of the family, to the sea, and they became the vikings, the sons of the inlets, the great early navigators, the roamers and travelers of the sea—the dread of all seafaring men and countries. They conquered all the best of France and occupied it; they largely changed the population of the British Isles, and they were the Normans who with William in 1066 overran and modified the whole people and life of England. They came to England to unite with their cousins. The Norse spirit came to America and traveled the trackless woods and prairie—the East as English, and the Mississippi valley as French.

They traveled, explored, settled, fought and conquered the wild life of a new continent, and Boone and Clark and Putnam and Fremont and Carson and Cody are modern Norsemen in a new world. French in the valley, English on the coast, mountains between.

The modern history of the Mississippi valley really begins shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century. Settlements had existed before, but they were the remnants of an old and a foreign civilization; our real modern history began when America began to become America and not merely an outpost of a foreign country.

England had occupied the coast plain to the mountains and France had her chains of forts, her missionar-ies and her hunters immediately west of the mountains for a hundred years.

For either to cross the ridge meant war, and any one who has read history must see that war was as inevitable at the crossing as the fact of the crossing itself. I can not believe, however, that it was a war of the two nations, but merely a commercial war, as most other wars have been. Subtract commerce, however simple or complicated, and you will obliterate the chief causes of war.

If the hunters had not met, there would probably have been no national collision. The question of monopoly precedes the question of unity. Not only does the French and Indian War fall within this category, but our border wars with the Indians from the Atlantic to the Pacific are all based upon the same principle. The coming of the white man, not because he was white, not merely because he was cruel and frequently devoid of principle, but because his coming interfered with a monopoly upon which the Indian was dependent for his very existence, was always the signal for war. The Indian was a hunter, and civilization makes hunting unprofitable. Indians could live with the French, who were chiefly hunters and explorers, but they could not live with the English, who were settlers who cleared the land and drove away the bison and the bear, the deer and the turkey. Jordan told the whole truth about the Indian when he said, "The Indian required too much land to live on, so we had to kill him."

The British government in 1763 issued a proclamation that no grant of land should be made to the colonists west of the headwaters of those rivers flowing into the Atlantic ocean. This was upon the surface a strange proclamation, but behind it was a good political philosophy. More than one reason has been assigned for this order being promulgated. Was it to secure justice to the Indians, or was it to save to England the commerce

of the colonies? They would still be English colonies and English subjects west of the mountains.

But the English statesmen who had read history knew that commerce by primitive methods of transportation could never be carried on over mountain ranges. Neither rivers nor seas, nor deserts even, have prevented commerce, but, before the modern railroad, mountains were a barrier. The British government saw that if colonies were established west of the mountains, an independent and self-sustaining state must grow up and political independence would become not only desirable but a necessity.

The small horses, which we should now call ponies, that were used for pack-horses over mountain roads, each carried an average burden of two hundred pounds. When the National Road was built through western Pennsylvania, men were running pack trains in some instances consisting of as many as five hundred horses. Even at the enormous attendant expense only one hundred thousand pounds of freight could be moved by a five-hundred-horse train, and these trains moved from ten to twenty miles per day.

The commerce of a nation, even of a colony, could not be carried on over a mountain. A colony west of the mountains meant independence. English statesmen certainly saw this possibility, I might almost say, this necessity, and whether or not this fact was the basis of the order not to settle west of the headwaters of the Atlantic rivers, I am inclined to believe it the chief reason.

Regardless, however, of this proclamation or the reason for this command, the eastern population began to move west, and ten years before the Revolutionary war actually began there was a decided looking to the

west, although no considerable number of persons actually crossed the mountains. Dr. Walker, of Virginia, as early as 1747 explored the northeast portion of Kentucky and named the Cumberland river after the "Bloody Duke."¹ Walker was not the first white man in Kentucky, but was perhaps the first to leave a journal of his travels.

Of course there were many influences in the last half of the eighteenth century which led men from the Atlantic coast plain to the valley beyond the mountains.

Much of the best land had been taken up, leaving little opportunity, as they thought, for a head of a family to secure a home for himself, so he moved west, where even much better land could be had for little more than the asking. It was the natural overflow of a well-established community.

The spirit of adventure had much to do, for it always exists. There are always men who want to go west wherever they may abide. The Norseman is always with us.

When our progenitors on the Atlantic coast began to look toward homes and conquest beyond the Alleghanies, the greatest impediment in their path was the great blue wall that stood between them and the coveted land. Here geography again asserts itself and deflected the line of travel of even these hardy travelers whose Norse spirit had dared and suffered so much in the century immediately preceding this time. When the tide began to move in western and central Pennsylvania, northern and western Virginia and Maryland, it, rather than attempt "the crossing" directly, moved southwest, down the troughs of the mountains in the lines of least resistance, until in the course of time they

¹ So says Mann Butler.

found the breach in the wall.¹ Southwest Virginia and western North Carolina were settled by people largely of the Scotch-Irish stock and Calvinistic faith from Pennsylvania and northern Virginia. In 1769, Daniel Boone, a Scotch-Irishman from the Yadkin, inspired by Walker, found and passed through the Cumberland Gap and blazed out the Wilderness road. No less than seventy thousand people moved through this gap and over this road in fifteen years between 1774 and 1790, and these people became settlers, owners and directors of the life and policies of the great Mississippi valley. A new civilization and an independent self-directing government were established.

The French and Indian War had been fought because English-American hunters had begun to cross the mountains and interfere with the monopoly of the fur trade of the French in the Mississippi valley. Two other wars were yet to be fought, and the principles at issue were carried across the mountains by these same people. For across these mountains and through the Cumberland Gap came love of freedom and self-direction. There came the real Virginian, whose whole economic and social system rested upon slavery; there came also the Scotch-Irish Calvinist from Pennsylvania, via mountain troughs, whose social, economic and religious doctrines had grown in opposition to slavery, for keeping slaves in a cold climate is not economic, and our conscience is largely colored by our economic advantages. Thus we have two reasons why the highlanders of Kentucky and Tennessee were unionists in the Civil War times.

In the original settlement of this highland country

¹ See map facing title page in Imlay's *A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America*, London, 1793.

three strains of splendid blood mingled. James Robertson, the Scotch Presbyterian, John Sevier, the French Huguenot, and Evan Shelby, the Welsh Congregationalist, were leaders and types among the pioneers who early settled this region. The fiber and sinew, intellectual and moral as well as physical, possessed by the American Highlanders of to-day they get from these ancestors. Heroic events mark their history. John Sevier, attacking the stronghold at King's Mountain (1780), held by the most experienced British soldiery, and utterly routing them, is the contribution of the Highlanders to the cause of freedom in the Revolutionary War. They were no less heroic and loyal during the War of the Rebellion. Tennessee and Kentucky never went out of the Union by popular vote. The mountains were filled with loyal and patriotic citizens who thwarted the treasonable plans of the inhabitants of the lowlands. These mountain counties put one hundred and forty thousand troops into the loyal army, twenty thousand more than the entire enrollment of New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut in the same army. These Highland clans filled their quota in the Union Army from the opening to the close of the War of the Rebellion. They fought beside our bravest and fell beside our best in the battle for human freedom.

Said one traveler: "What impresses one most in riding through the mountains is the vast number of children. A mountaineer pointed to his cabin as I rode beside him on horseback along the winding bridle path some months ago, and said, 'Elder, that is my house over yonder.' I said, 'How many children have you?' He replied, 'Twenty-two; eighteen of them were boys and they were all in the Union army.' This family was somewhat representative."

Let us now turn to the making of roads leading to the west from the Atlantic States.

The logician who first saw the intimate relation existing between the number of maiden ladies and the production of clover seed might, if he had studied western highways, have stated an equally close relationship between modern civilization in the Mississippi valley and the size of a buffalo's hoof. The buffalo, being a large, heavy animal with a comparatively small foot, could not cross low, swampy, marshy lands; being gregarious to a very high degree, he could not continue long in one place, so great herds of many hundreds and sometimes of many thousands ranged together. The best of pasture vanished rapidly before such vast numbers, and frequently long journeys were taken by these herds from one feeding ground to another. Buffalo roads, therefore, were very definitely marked and well beaten in all parts of the continent where they roamed, and that was wherever grass grew and through the timber where native meadows were on opposite sides of the timber.

The small feet of these animals along with their heavy bodies necessitated their roads following the highlands—indeed, the ridges, the water divides—the backbones of various sections of the country. The Indians followed these roads for two reasons—first, because they were as lazy as they dared be and live; second, because they were hungry. It saved labor in making roads and it furnished opportunity to kill a buffalo occasionally by being on the line of trail.

The buffalo and the Indian followed those lines of travel upon which nature drove them by means of the physical needs and economic wants. When the white man came as an explorer, hunter or settler, he followed precisely the same routes for precisely the same reasons,

and it is an exceedingly interesting but not at all a strange logic that finally placed all the great highways of commerce and transportation on the lines first laid out by the wild beast. The wild man and these native creatures possessed the same engineering sense but not the same engineering skill that is now exhibited by our great railway systems. The same hand that guided the buffalo still guides the surveyors' instruments—fundamentally an economic interest.

The buffalo avoided the hill and the swamp and therefore took the ridge or the valley.

If you should care to know where the buffaloes built their roads centuries ago, consult your map and find the location of the Cumberland road, the main line of the Pennsylvania, the New York Central and Hudson River, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Chesapeake and Ohio, and the Lake Shore.

The first improvement the white man made in the roads he found was to widen them occasionally, so that his pack-horse in passing through would not injure the pack he carried by contact with the trees on either side. Ultimately these were widened into wagon and stage-coach roads and many were converted into railroads.

I want now to speak of the Wilderness road and its travelers. It was the greatest of its kind and had much to do with Indiana and especially with the southern portion. I do not mean merely the extreme south part, but as far north as Henry county, Hendricks county and Johnson county, and others on this line, which were largely populated by people directly from Kentucky and earlier from Virginia, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

It might be difficult to indicate just where the Wilderness road began and just where it ceased to be the

Wilderness road, but in brief it is the road that led by way of the Cumberland Gap from the east, northeast and southeast to the west, northwest and southwest of the Cumberland mountains into the valley of the Ohio and Mississippi.

There was one continuous road from Philadelphia by way of Cumberland, Maryland, down the trough of the mountains near what is now the eastern boundary of West Virginia past Fort Chissel to Cumberland Gap, thence to the falls of the Ohio, a distance by that route of eight hundred and twenty-six miles, more than two hundred of which, from Fort Chissel, was without human habitation. When we now think of making a journey on foot with a family through the mountains and forests beset with wild beasts and savage men, we wonder what great hearts, what determined courage, what bold, adventurous spirits our ancestors must have had, even to undertake such a journey. From Richmond, Virginia, a road led nearly due west to Fort Chissel and joined the road leading from all parts of Pennsylvania just described. All these tributaries from east, north and south joined in one great stream at the Cumberland Gap.

A portion of this stream, however, did not come north. It went south into Tennessee, and Nashville was established. Yet not all that came from the east and northeast came through the Gap. That portion that went south into Tennessee and finally up into western Kentucky separated from the main stream at Fort Chissel and followed down the Holston or Nollichuckee rivers again to escape the mountains. They found a pass not far from where Knoxville is now located, following the line of the present railroad from Knoxville to Washington, D. C. A comparatively small portion of the trav-

elers, however, went south of the Cumberland Gap. The main line of travel after passing the Gap turned northwest toward where Boonsborough, Harrodsburg, formerly Harrodstown, and Lexington were afterward located, and toward the falls—later Louisville,—the crossing to Vincennes and St. Louis.

Two conditions led them in this direction. First, it was the road of least resistance. After crossing the Gap the water flows northwest, and the small streams have their source there that later form the Kentucky river. In addition to this natural course, the former travelers in this region had carried east most fabulous stories of the beautiful and fertile grass lands of Kentucky and the great quantities of game available for food. The blue grass region of Kentucky is no modern invention. With its fine natural meadows, its fine supply of running water, its salt licks and its forests, it was the habitat of more game than could be found in the same area almost anywhere else. Buffaloes roamed here in immense herds and deer were relatively as numerous; bear and wild turkey furnished the food for many a hungry traveler and settler. In prehistoric times these same licks were visited by immense numbers of mastodon, who, for sake of keeping the records correct in the absence of a State Geologist or a newspaper, left their bones when they had done with them, and the name "Big Bone Lick" is the written record after printing took the place of living.

Because Kentucky had these great natural resources, the early settlers had great natural enemies in the Indians. Kentucky was for the Indians not so much a home as a hunting ground. In fact, it seems not to have been the abiding place of the tribes, but was a common hunting and therefore a common fighting ground for the

tribes from both the north and south, and there were well-beaten paths from the north and south into Kentucky. It is said that the name Kentucky meant dark and bloody ground before the whites came upon the scene. The Indians had questions of monopoly and closed shops to settle for the same purposes and on the same principles as their more civilized followers have, and their methods of settlement were but little more savage. Every Indian was the natural enemy of every white man who settled in Kentucky, and no less than fifteen hundred whites were killed by the Indians in the first few years of Kentucky settlement.

From Kentucky came large numbers of settlers into southern Indiana. Many of their young men came into Indiana and Ohio as soldiers in the early Indian wars down to the close of the War of 1812, and large numbers of these remained north of the Ohio or returned there as settlers. While we may now condemn the fighting instincts of the average Kentuckian, our salvation on several occasions depended almost wholly on his ability in this line.

At first glance it seems rather strange that the Wilderness road should have been used by any except those directly from the southern portion of Virginia and from North Carolina, since the Ohio river was both the natural highway and the shorter route, but, so far as I can find any records, the river did not become the main route of travel, or even a prominent one, until the Ohio Company located its purchase on the Muskingum in 1788. From that time on the river was in general and frequent use not only by the people from New England, Pennsylvania and the East, but as well by those from Maryland and northern Virginia, and many settlers on both sides of the Ohio river used the waterway as a route of travel.

But we must not forget that by the year 1788, when the river came into general use, from fifty to seventy thousand persons had already come overland by the Wilderness road and the Cumberland Gap. So far as I know, up to that period there is no parallel to this great stream of human life pouring over so long, so difficult and so dangerous a road merely to find a more desirable home. Whether the motive assigned for taking the long road rather than the short one is true or an adequate explanation, I can not vouch, yet it is assigned by authoritative historians and to me sounds exceedingly plausible. The motive assigned is that travelers were in greater danger from Indians when traveling upon the river than when traveling overland. The savages could conceal themselves upon the bank of the river at any point and have the traveler absolutely at his mercy with almost no possible means of defense, while that same white traveler in the woods might have been quite a match for the most wily savage. The two in the forest were essentially equals, but one in a boat and the other in the woods made the latter much superior. "A more pitiable sight is not conceivable than a cargo of emigrants on a rude, drifting craft, fifteen feet wide and forty feet long, helpless on the bosom of the Ohio, receiving a murderous fire from the bank."

Mr. Hulbert suggests, in "The Wilderness Road," that even in the forest the traveler was at some disadvantage, in the fact that the buffalo roads that became the white man's road was on the ridge, which made the white more generally visible to his enemy than his enemy was to him. In fact, in the rough country the white traveler was frequently on the sky line of the savage.

Of direct interest to us, beyond their general historic interest, is the fact that these men and women who came

through the gap or down the river were the fathers of the early settlers of the south half of Indiana, and the influence of the State has been and is still being influenced by all the tendencies that all these people brought with them. There came to us with these people the good stock and the best traditions of the old Virginians, along with some of the worst social views of these same people—exemplified in the strong slavery tendencies and the effort to break down the Ordinance of 1787. Across the Ohio river also came many closely allied to the poor whites of the South, who are as worthless here as they were there, and yet they are the logical product of the social conditions under which their ancestors had lived for several generations, and it is not surprising that they still lower our grade of energy and life.

Along with those with the Southern tendencies came many of the Scotch-Irish Calvinists who had formerly settled in the highlands of Pennsylvania and who had followed down the mountain troughs to Virginia and North Carolina. They were an energetic, sturdy, determined, industrious, religious group of people. They believed in Hades and some of them practiced it.

There were among these also many from Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey, and some from New York and many real New Englanders. In fact, the first real American settlement in the Northwest Territory was a thoroughly Yankee settlement. This was at Marietta, Ohio, under Rufus Putnam, whose name alone tells the whole story.

Marietta was established in 1788, just the year after the Ordinance, and to the New England sentiment and to Putnam himself and to Cutler we owe the best provision of that famous document, the anti-slavery provision.

It was to be the home of the Revolutionary soldier from the New England anti-slavery States.

When I say there were a scattering few New Englanders among all these people who came over these roads to the West, I refer to the group as a whole, but in addition to these isolated cases we must not overlook the fact that there were two considerable reservations where large numbers of New Englanders settled and in such majorities that their characteristics dominated and yet dominate the entire communities.

One of these settlements was Marietta, the earliest made in the State of Ohio. This was organized for and by New England officers of the Revolution to secure to themselves the land and homes that were owing them from the government. In this were Putnam and Cutler, who did much, not only for the settlement, but for Ohio and the entire Northwest Territory.

The other great New England stronghold was Connecticut's Western Reserve of one million five hundred thousand acres in the northeast portion of Ohio, largely settled by Connecticut people. Of this one million five hundred thousand acres, about five hundred thousand were set apart for Connecticut citizens who had lost heavily by fire and other destructive causes in the Revolution. These were called the "fire lands."

Marietta has its college and its historical society. The Western Reserve has its university and its historical society. Even the Firelands in Huron county at Norwalk, Ohio, has its historical society, which has published two quite large volumes.

We see in all these places the New England tendencies of education and preservation. We have in our own State New England settlements, but none so marked as these, for nowhere else were such definite provisions

made for them on so large a scale. However, in northern Indiana there are some settlements almost purely New England in composition.

It is doubtless true that a goodly number of the early settlers in the half century covered by this paper came by the overland route which became the National road or the Cumberland road, as it was even more frequently called.

These people settled in the eastern central counties of our own State. They were composed of two characteristic classes of Pennsylvanians, the Pennsylvania Germans and the Pennsylvania Scotch-Irish, and their descendants still occupy the land. Many who came from Uniontown and Brownsville, Pennsylvania, settled in what is now Union county and Brownsville, Indiana.

North of this line of travel, which was about the present line of the Cumberland road, the main lines of travel west were along the lake shore, on essentially the line of the Lake Shore railroad.

This line of travel was followed, not by the people from the States so far considered, but from western New York and the New England States. Across the State of New York from east to west were built as early or earlier than 1809, three turnpikes, all leading essentially from the Hudson river to Lake Erie. These three roads were the New State road, from south of Oneida Lake, from Utica to Ft. Niagara; the Ontario and Genesee turnpike, by Utica and Syracuse, and by the north end of lakes Seneca and Cayuga; the third parallel fifty miles south at the opposite end of these lakes by Ithaca, called the Lake Erie turnpike; and located along the lines are the chief commercial inland cities of New York, Syracuse, Utica, Rochester and Batavia. The main road was the

Genesee, and at the end of that, and because of it, Buffalo grew.

These roads accommodated not only the emigrants from New York State, but also from all the northern portions of the New England States. When New England crossed the Hudson, it crossed at that break in the highlands near Albany. Both north and south of this section are hills and mountains too difficult, which means too expensive, to cross, so the lines of travel, both of animals and men, were in the lines of least resistance and we have the Genesee pike, the Erie canal, and the New York and Hudson River railroads almost parallel and in close proximity.

The builders of transportation lines, whether wagon-roads, railroads or canals, have been wise enough first to observe the lines along which men and commerce naturally find outlet.

Over these New York roads there came to the lake a stream of strong, vigorous, healthful people from northern and western New York and from New England, who planted settlements in northern Ohio and then in northern Indiana. Some came directly to Indiana. Many tarried a season in Ohio. These people brought with them their sturdy, vigorous character and manhood and have retained it. Some of these settlers settled down in groups or colonies and gave the names to these groups and towns that had designated the places from which they came. Most of these settlers scattered themselves by ones and twos and leavened the whole section of the country.

Joining these New York and New England groups were sturdy Germans from New York and Pennsylvania, who came almost due west along the line of the Lake

Shore road, and in northern Indiana we have a considerable per cent. of German population.

A large proportion of our population of northern Indiana came directly from Ohio to Indiana, but they had tarried in the Buckeye State but a few years or perhaps a generation or so, and were essentially the Eastern population.

While we are remembering the fact that these turn-pikes and wilderness roads and canals and the natural waterways brought thousands of emigrants to the old Northwest Territory and later to the States of that territory, we must remember as well that the Eastern people who expected to remain East, including the government itself, were even more anxious for good roads and artificial waterways—in fact, for any way to transport people and goods—than those who expected to brave the dangers and hardships of savage and wilderness for a home in the then Far West.

In accounting for the anxiety of the Eastern people who were to remain East, we can find much reason in pure commercialism, which is not to be despised, for the East knew enough of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys to know that ultimately a great commerce must flow from these valleys, and that the natural outlet by water, the only method of transportation at that time, was down these two rivers to ocean navigation at New Orleans.

For trade to go its natural course was to place the trade of the continent in the hands of the enemies of the English government and the English colonies while the government was colonial, and the enemies of the American government after the Revolution, for France and Spain controlled New Orleans.

And worse still, to turn the commercial face of these valleys to the west and south must emphasize the nat-

ural barrier between the East and West—that is, the mountains—and this meant clearly that two civilizations and two national spirits must grow up where only one was desired.

Especially was this point important when after the Revolution it became apparent that the adhesive power of the colonies was not great enough to endure a severe strain. Washington himself made trips through Maryland and Virginia and what is now West Virginia, personally inspecting the country with the one idea in mind as to what could be done in the lines of transportation that would commercially unite the Ohio valley to the East rather than let its trade follow the natural trade routes south. He advocated the building of a canal across that rough country of West Virginia to unite the waters of the Ohio with the Potomac and the sea. On this same line a turnpike was afterward planned and later was laid the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad.

Later came the Cumberland road, which was the chief band that held the East and the West together and made them one, and Mr. Hulbert, speaking of this road, says of it that it was the greatest influence “to harmonize and strengthen, if not to save, the Union.”

Had our commercial interests in 1860 been South and not East, we should certainly not have taken the stand we did. Had the Civil War come on under such conditions, we can guess that the results would have been different from what they were, if not quite the opposite.

The Wabash and Erie canal was built two-thirds of a century ago to make New York the commercial port for this portion of the country rather than New Orleans, and that canal had its origin years earlier in the demand of the fur traders for a connection between the headwa-

ters of the Wabash and the headwaters of the Maumee—a ditch across the portage a distance of only seven or eight miles, yet the Wabash and Erie canal when finished was more than four hundred miles in length.

CONCLUSION.

This whole story is one of daring and hardship, one that tried souls and bodies both. How men, women and children trudged on foot through wilds in all sorts of weather a journey of from five hundred to eight hundred miles over a rough, mountainous, uninhabited country, is now quite beyond our appreciation. They traveled without priest or apothecary and practically without any protection other than that afforded by gun and ax. These statements are true especially of those who came to Kentucky from Virginia and North Carolina by way of the Wilderness road.

Those who started from the New England States and northern New York were very much better prepared for the journey, especially so at starting. Many of them, however, were but little or no better off on reaching their destination. It is well for us in the midst of luxury to look back occasionally and try to appreciate how we came by it.

I am inclined to believe also that there is no better index to nor explanation of our varied tastes and industries—to our composite character—in the valleys of the Ohio and central Mississippi, than is to be gained by a study of our origins. Is it not also the most fundamental explanation of our balance of temperament and character?

I am sure nothing can bring us to a saner view of the immeasurable blessings we enjoy, even of our extravagance in plenty—even luxury—than the knowledge of the

hardships, privations and sufferings that our ancestors endured that we might live, yet I doubt not that what they endured is quite as incomprehensible to us as would be our luxury and extravagance to the minds of those people who trudged across Cumberland Gap in the days of the Revolution.