

'And this country spreads out past miles, a great content of land, but between here and there are a power of rough mountains.'

Nathan Jones told his listeners of a river through the land, one of the wonders of the world, called the Chenoa or Chonano-no, or some called it the Millewakane.

"He told about a man, Dan'l Boone, a master hand to hunt and discover new countries. Boone has been over the whole of Kentuck and he lived there one winter season through, with his brother. Spring-o'-the year, and Squire Boone, brother to Dan'l, went back to the settlements to get what was needed, powder and lead and some more horses, and Dan'l stayed. All by his lone self, he was, three months, and never once saw a white face. Not even a dog for company. Nights, and he lay in the cane or in a thicket, hid. Not even a fire, so the Indians wouldn't find out where he stayed.'

'Tell me more about this Boone.' Thomas Hall spoke then. Did your surveyor hold speech with the discoverer?'

"The talk sank and flowed about strong men who made brave journeys into the country beyond the barrier. 'Such a country would breed up a race of heroes, men built and knitted together to endure . . . ' and another voice: 'A new race for the earth.' The men who had gone for this long hazard, Boone and his company, had been called the Long Hunters." Kentucky was far apart from Diony now, behind unwieldy mountains.

Diony's father belonged to the tidewater folk, aristocrats of the Eastern States, was literary in his tastes, and read aloud to his family from his beloved books. Diony knew what name she bore, knew that Dione was a great goddess, taking rank with Rhea, the mother of Venus by Jupiter, in the lore of Homer, and was grateful for a name of such dignity. Polly Brook, her mother, with her parents, had walked back over the Blue Ledge. Earlier they had come out of Pennsylvania. "They were a lonely people, being Methodists, given to simple living and humility. They were but a few in Albemarle. Their preacher came at long intervals from beyond the Ledge, and when he came there was a loud chanting of humility and holiness in the house."

Other folk who enter intimately into the story are the Jarvis men and their mother, Mistress Elvira Jarvis, who lived on their plantation, five miles away down the stream. Out along the river and the larger watercourses there were other families; thus the tilled land and the unbroken forests touched their parts about Diony.

The love of Diony for her younger sister—wilful charming Betty—and Betty's idolising of Diony are pretty incidents. "Talk to me, Diony," Betty begged, as Diony was spinning the yarn, and offering help. "Then Diony's heart swelled to a great size, and seemed of a fullness that would burst, and a pity for Betty closed her eyes until the tears washed backward over her mind and eased her heart of its power, for Betty loved her with idolatry, and clung to her. Betty lived in her words from hour to hour, and came back to her again for renewing of life.

"Tell again what a city would be," Betty said. "Tell what would come to me iffen I went there, and all how it would be."

Then Diony would draw on her imagination, would describe the journey eastward to visit their fashionable cousins, and the clothes they would wear, the great house where their cousin lived, its fine furnishings, and the enchantment of the life of the tide water cities.

"Oh, we'll go there," Betty cried. "Diony, would you take me? Mought we go some day? Say and tell me, will you take me there, to see Isobel?"

And Diony, promised. "If ever I can I'll do so. We'll go to the tide water iffen it's in human power."

But Fate ordained otherwise. Berk Jarvis brought another visitor to the farm, an old man, who had been all the way to Kentuck, who vividly described its charm.

"Yea, it is a good land, the most extraordinary that ever I knew. Meadow and woodland as far as eye can behold. Beauteous tracts on a great scope, miles. A fine river makes a bound to it on the north and another fine river flows far to the west, another boundary. To the east is a boundary of rugged mountains. And set above the mountains is a great cliff wall that stands across the way. Yea, you would know you had come to the country of Caintuck when you saw that place. A cliff wall makes a steep barrier across your path beyond any man's strength to climb. But high up in the mountains, cut in the cliff, is a gate. I was in and out of it for years to peer out the land and to spy its wonders.

"The Author of Nature has point blank made a promise land," Thomas said. "A place fitted to nurture a fine race, a land of promise."

"But a weary way through the wilderness," Polly said. "No path under your foot, no trace to guide where you'd set your next step. Savages to kill you and get your skulp may be."

"But the country is like Paradise. Rich cane. Trees all in blowth in the spring-o'-the-year. Like Paradise it is, so beautiful and good."

"Tell please about the bird you named awhile ago, sir."

"A woodcock there, and its beak is pure ivory. I saw this witness for myself. Yea, I saw a woodcock with a beak that is like a jewel stone."

Diony looked across to Berk Jarvis, her head suddenly lifted, her eyes bright, and all her inner part leaping. He smiled a delayed smile and looked happily back, and the look said to her 'I would go there any chance I had, Berk Jarvis,' and her look replied, 'I would go, I Diony would go to see the ivory-beaked woodcock'."

So we come to the parting of the ways. The attraction of the tideway cities of the East for Betty, the unknown West for Diony. "Diony knew that she would go with Berk wherever he went. Her whole body swayed towards the wilderness, towards some farther part of the world which was not yet known or sensed in any human mind."

We must leave the reader whose interest has been aroused in this wonderful book to read the full story it unfolds—the wedding of Diony to Berk Jarvis, the journey of the little party of settlers, the incredible hardships endured while crossing the mountains, the primitive life in Harrod's Fort (Harrod was large and hearty-handsome, his eyes black like his hair, a great man who went continually among his people, busy in the fort, in the smith shop, in the cleared spaces outside. He was big and generous of his great strength, ready to help any man, even the lowliest); the tragedies which befell Diony, Elvira Jarvis, Berk Jarvis and Muir, and the births of little Tom and Michael. It is a story of breathless interest, which should not be missed by those who appreciate fine literature, and the history of those pioneers who at the peril and often the sacrifice of their own lives made safe for posterity the fair land of Kentucky—Kentuck—Kentakee—Meadow-Lands.

P. G. Y.

Those interested in the Frontier Nursing Service, founded and so wonderfully organised by Mrs. Mary Breckinridge, for the help of the mountain folk in Kentucky, U.S.A., and who came to England to take the C.M.B. examination before she began, will revel in this remarkable book. It has found a place in the Isla Stewart Bookcase.

WORD FOR THE MONTH.

"Ce n'est ni le genie, ni la gloire, ni l'amour qui mesurent l'élevation de l'âme: c'est la bonté."

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