

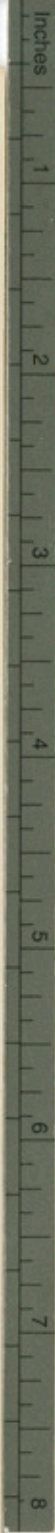
ARTICLE

Published in Independent, 1904.

No.22, Vol.9.

SUBJECT:

The Feuds in the Cumberland Mountains.



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Published in Independent, 1904.

No. 32, Vol. 9.

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The Peaks in the Cumberland Mountains.

THE FEUDS IN THE CUMBERLAND MOUNTAINS.

To the Readers of the Independent:

The first time I visited Jackson, Kentucky, two years ago, I was made to realize more than I could without personal experience the feud spirit, and something of the mischief its effects. Just then there was apparently an armed neutrality. The parties were divided about equally on the one side and on the other side of the controversy. It was difficult to get them into a common assembly without an outbreak. The institute, which has fine industrial features, was almost destitute of students. Parents outside of Jackson, far and near, were afraid to send their children. Strong men with tears deprecated the acute condition of affairs.

A little later I sat at a table where there were confidential conversations and hints that something was to be done in the line of revenge. One of the guests at that table, a young man about nineteen years of age, quiet and peaceful in appearance, was Curtis Jett, the very young man who is now under conviction for having shot Marcus in the City of Jackson.

I asked a good woman who knew him what she thought of him. This was at my second visit after he had been arrested. She said he was a very quiet young man and never had killed anybody except when under the influence of drink, and then had shot only two or three men.

While this feud spirit is recognizable, yet it does not appear throughout the mountain country except when there is some

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To the Borders of the Independent.

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end of existence. Persons outside of Jackson, far and near, were

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A little later I sat at a table where there were con-

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in the line of revenge. One of the guests at that table, a young

man about nineteen years of age, quiet and pleasant in appearance,

was Curtis Jett, the very young man who is now under conviction

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him. This was at my second visit after he had been arrested.

She said he was a very quiet young man and never had killed any-

body except when under the influence of drink, and then had shot

only two or three men.

While this last night is unforgettable, yet it does not

appear throughout the mountain country except when there is some

occasion to bring it out, and then whisky always performs its part. For example, after one of our meetings in a small village near the railroad, just as the congregation was leaving the large tent of worship, two men came riding along on the same horse. One, half intoxicated, slipped off behind the horse and pulled out his revolver. He said he was going to shoot Will. The women and children ran and screamed and for a time there was a social ferment very much as occurred in war time when skirmishers from both sides came into a village. Several men quieted the belligerent and got him away, then the terror ceased. Had he found Will doubtless he would have emptied his revolver.

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the delirious and got him away. Then the terror ceased. Had
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revolver.

Miss Collins
please copy
as corrected & changed
OK (1)

To the Readers of the Independent:

THE FEUDS IN THE CUMBERLAND MOUNTAINS.

It is difficult for most people to take in the geography of what are called "the Cumberland Mountains," or the Appalachian Range. So far as I have observed, and I have ^{of late} made two extensive journeys on horseback through this rough country, there is not distinctly visible from any quarter any regularly defined range.

Starting from Richmond, Kentucky, not far from Berea, ^{College} in the blue grass region, and passing southward ~~just over the~~ rough ^{rough} mountains more or less elevated and narrow valleys, and following on directly south to Knoxville, a distance of two hundred miles, there ^{was} ~~is~~ no breadth of country that you would call level: no prairie. It is all mountain and valley. Again, ^{I left} leaving Wilmore, ^{ky.} near ~~to~~ Lexington, and ^{ran} ~~running~~ up to Jackson ^{then I passed} ~~and passing~~ through several counties such as Lee, Perry, Leslie, Bell and Harlan in Kentucky, and Claiborne, Tennessee, ~~and there~~ ^{all} a distance of one hundred and fifty miles ~~which is also~~ distinctly mountainous.

The three forks of the Kentucky river course through narrow valleys, and little streams ^{run} ~~pass~~ into those forks all the way to the very upper ^{reaches which are} ~~ranges~~ near the divide that passes from the Kentucky ~~river~~ over into the Cumberland ^{river}. In these little valleys ^{I found} ~~we find~~ steep hillsides and very little cultivatable land; where the mountain streams ^{as there were} flow torrents in the spring-time, but ^{only gentle rivulets} ~~very gentle~~ in the harvest season. If you take what is regarded as the highest range, ^{through} ~~the~~ the divide between Kentucky and Tennessee, ^{is} ~~the~~ Cumberland Gap.

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distinctly visible from any quarter any regularly defined range.

Starting from Richmond, Kentucky, not far from Berea,

in the blue grass region, and passing southward past some fine rolling mountains more or less elevated and narrow valleys, and following on directly south to Knoxville, a distance of two hundred miles,

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several counties such as Lee, Perry, Leslie, Bell and Harlan in

Kentucky, and Claiborne, Tennessee, a distance of one

hundred and fifty miles which is also distinctly mountainous.

The three forks of the Kentucky river course through narrow valleys

and little streams pass into those forks all the way to the very

upper ranges near the divide that passes from the Kentucky river

over into the Cumberland. In these little valleys water steep

hillsides and very little cultivatable land; where the mountain

streams flow torrents in the spring-time, but very dry in the

harvest season. It is not what is regarded as the highest range,

the divide between Kentucky and Tennessee, with Cumberland Gap.

Make that pass

which is a pass through that range as a center, and describe a circle ^{with} radius of sixty miles, you take in a vast proportion of ^{this} very irregular mountain region. ^I have visited the

In the vicinity of the Gap there are villages; and ^{these} along the lines of the two railroads ~~there are hamlets~~ which have from twenty to one hundred houses, some frame and some after the old log pattern. ~~At the railroad stations the frame-houses usually prevail~~ ^{dominantly frame-houses than the log-structures are seen at the railroad stations}

In this country so mapped out, which includes portions of Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky and touches the edge of North Carolina, there are about three hundred thousand inhabitants.

The most of them live in such valleys as I have described and in homes such as those of which I send you pictures. Almost everywhere these homes are ^{now} being improved as the people gain in means and in intelligence. ^{off the railways where I meet the homes keep} They are usually from a half a mile to a mile apart, and they furnish an average of seven children to a family. Some of the families ^{had} have as high as from twelve to fifteen children. One Howard family ^{in Breathitt County in the mountains} that I know of in the ~~Kentucky mountains~~ had twenty sons and several daughters.

^{When you leave the railroad lines and go over a few high hills and come to regions where the roads are too bad for wagons and where the people travel on horse back or mule back altogether.} ^{I found that the schools have been spreading from the county seat of each county out into the various parts of its jurisdiction.} ^{for example} When I was in Leslie county there was a convention of teachers

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When I was in Leslie county there was a convention of teachers

^{who}
~~and the teachers~~ were being examined as to their fitness to teach
 before being sent out ^{far & near} to take their places and hold schools in
~~rather~~ poor buildings, sometimes without windows, with only doors
 for lighting, - to hold and teach their pupils as well as they
 could for eight or twelve weeks, according to the amount of money
 appropriated by the state or the county for their support. This
^{I saw} work was supervised by two Presbyterian missionaries working ^{harmoniously}
 the officials of the county.

In much of the territory through which I went there were
 no books and seldom did I find a newspaper of any kind. Yet
 the interest in behalf of the children had begun to develop.
 People ^{all along my route} talked about the schools.

^(my companion in my first journey)
 Dr. E. O. Guerrant of Kentucky, at the head of the
 Inland Mission, ^{has} sent out a hundred teachers to a hundred
 different stations, ^{into the mountains & valleys} ~~in the country places~~. In the districts
^{held by him} ~~occupied by him~~ I usually found a store and a meeting house. I
 left his work when I passed the "Log College" at Squabble Creek,
^{Eastern} near the border of Perry County. Hundreds of children ^{were then} flock-
 ing to that so-called Log College. A great number of them ~~could~~
 could not read ^{among adults & little ones} ~~when I was there~~, but the enthusiasm for knowledge
 was great and growing. The inhabitants ^{declared themselves} were willing to make any
 sacrifice that their children might have better advantages than
 they themselves had had. ^{as I rode along to find}

It seemed extraordinary to me ~~that~~ such a vast number
 of people ~~were~~ living in that mountain country. After I left

and the teachers were being examined as to their fitness to teach before being sent out to take their places and hold schools in rather poor buildings, sometimes without windows, with only doors for lighting - to hold and teach their pupils as well as they could for eight or twelve weeks, according to the amount of money appropriated by the state or the county for their support. This work was supervised by two Presbyterian missionaries working with the officials of the county.

In much of the territory through which I went there were no books and seldom did I find a newspaper of any kind. Yet the interest in behalf of the children had begun to develop. People talked about the schools.

Dr. E. O. Gurnett of Kentucky, at the head of the Inland Mission, had sent out a hundred teachers to a hundred different stations. In the districts occupied by him I usually found a store and a meeting house. I left his work when I passed the Dog College at Spanish Creek, near the border of Perry County. Hundreds of children were flocking to that so-called Dog College. A great number of them could not read when I was there, but the enthusiasm for knowledge was great and growing. The inhabitants were willing to make any sacrifice that their children might have better advantages than they themselves had had. It seemed extraordinary to me that such a vast number of people were living in that mountain country. After I left

Jackson, and in fact after I had left the Log College and ^{also later} ~~west~~ ^{gone}
 southward ~~and eastward~~, I did not see one black man in all that
^{region} ~~country~~. At Jackson ^{I saw} ~~there was~~ a small group of them; and at
 Pineville, where I came out of the rougher wilderness to the
 railroad, I found quite a large settlement of negroes. For
 some reason the mountain whites and the negroes have not affiliated.
 The ^{mountain} ~~mountain~~ people ^{here} are not idle and listless ^{part of the} ~~in this country~~.
 They are ^{and} ~~are~~ industrious, hard-working people. John Fox in his
 "Little Shepherd of Kingdon Come" has magnificently drawn and
 painted in ^{clear-cut} ~~object lessons of different kinds~~ the difference
 between the blue grass people and the people of the mountains;
 only one would infer that his Chad Buford, with kingly qualities,
 was an exception. My experience would warrant me in saying that
 vast numbers of the young men of today ^{among the rugged hills} have similar qualities.
 Of course there are a few who are found in squalor and degradation,
 but they are but few compared with the many who, like the children
 of the New England highlands, are intelligent and susceptible of
 any degree of culture. ^{Y me} ~~There is~~ a free, bold spirit everywhere.
 The young men ^{we have noticed} with a little discipline - rather hard to give it
^{is true} ~~to them--~~ make the very best soldiers and the most enterprising ^{Students}
~~pioneers of civilization~~. Hawaii, Cuba and the Philippines, with
 all that goes with these names, have been drawing ^{from} them ~~out~~. They
 are like the Rough Riders of Roosevelt. ^{such as you know} ~~The schools are alone~~
^{with such spirited spirited youth}
 You ask me then "What do they most need?" I answer at

4

also later

Jackson, and in fact after I had left the Log College and went southward and eastward, I did not see one black man in all that country. At Jackson there was a small group of them and at Pineville, where I came out of the rougher wilderness to the railroad, I found quite a large settlement of negroes. For some reason the mountain whites and the negroes have not intermingled. The mountain people are not idle and listless in this country. They are industrious, hard-working people. John Fox in his "Little Shepherd of Kingston Come" has magnificently drawn and painted in object lessons of different kinds the difference between the blue grass people and the people of the mountains; only one would infer that his Chad Buford, with kindly qualities, was an exception. My experience would warrant me in saying that vast numbers of the young men of today have similar qualities. Of course there are a few who are found in squalor and degradation, but they are but few compared with the many who, like the children of the New England highlands, are intelligent and susceptible of any degree of culture. There is a free, bold spirit everywhere. The young men with a little discipline - rather hard to give it to them - make the very best soldiers and the most enterprising pioneers of civilization. Hawaii, Cuba and the Philippines, with all that goes with these names, have been drawing them out. They are like the Rough Riders of Roosevelt. You ask me then "What do they most need?" I answer at

once, "Good schools and good roads." In all my educational work of thirty years I have followed this thought and epigram, namely: "You cannot keep up the lower grades in school operations without the higher." The college life was a stay and support to the common schools for many years. The academy fed the college. Not satisfied with the small number, those educational leaders like Horace Mann led off and established the ~~high schools~~ ^{reached by higher grade institutions then existing} and the normal schools which for a time seemed to be hostile to the college and university. Later we have found in the West and in the South that it was wise to have object lessons set forth in what I have been pleased to call "universities", like that of Ann Arbor, Michigan, or that at Minneapolis, or for the liberated race, including those ^{of any race} who are willing to share its benefits ^{like} ~~any race~~, like the Howard University at Washington. This university combined eight or ten departments; the very naming of them shows the work. "The Normal" includes the experimental classes; "the Preparatory" fits for the college course; the Medical, including pharmacy; the Law; the Commercial; the Theological; and the Industrial are the same as elsewhere. The name implies the work they do. Great stress has ^{everywhere} been laid upon the industrial features, of late, ^{greater} greater than ever before. One reason is to satisfy those who think that the highest training unfits a man for the trades and industries. Another reason is that working organizations have excluded apprenticeship to trades and given very little development to the industries in the line of preparatory education.

5

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6

This reasoning applies to the mountains.

You know that I have been working with a body of excellent men to furnish an object lesson of such a kind, of university in the heart of the mountains which we call Lincoln Memorial. We are straining every nerve to make the industries as nearly self supporting as possible, and to give the young men and young women opportunities to work out a part of their education in some one or other of those industries. Much money is needed, of course, for this work, whoever takes it up. *you may connect with over the Cumberland ranges at this, I expect a few days*

According to my last information our great university near Cumberland Gap. ⁹⁵ ~~the~~ small endowment is now assured, ~~has~~ *it has* sent out some fifty teachers. They have gone from the Harrow Hall, near Cumberland Gap village; and also from Grant-Lee Hall, and are proceeding from the ^{new} Avery Hall. They are not all graduates; some teach during a part of the year and attend the university during the remainder. Many of them, when they can, go back after teaching to get more knowledge and to be better trained for their work. *I talked with one young lady, a bright mountain girl, who had just come back from teaching a school of 12 weeks.*

Other institutions besides the Lincoln Memorial University ~~are~~ *have been* doing the same thing, and I rejoice in their ~~work~~ *enterprises*.

I rejoice in everything *which pushes forward* concerning our work for the mountain people, *and do not forget the roads.*

\$ I covet large appropriations from Congress to set an example in the way of building roads. If Congress would appropriate one-fifth of the amount necessary to make a good road, conditioned upon the four-fifths being raised *in a neighborhood* to complete it, from a railroad center to the county-seat in the mountains, the work

89 pupils mostly beginners.

This is the beginning of the new era.

You know that I have been working with a body of excel-

lent men to furnish an object lesson of such a kind of university
which we call Lincoln Memorial. We are straining every nerve to

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priate one-fifth of the amount necessary to make a good road,

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~~the colleges and~~ universities within reach.

as ~~you know~~, is inherited and there is nothing can root that out but the change of heart that comes with bona fide Christianity, or perhaps I had better say in a larger sense, with bona fide Godliness. The Jew and the Christian alike understand very well how to ~~so~~ train children ^{So} as to crush out forever the feud spirit.

frequently

As I was passing one creek-settlement, a farmer ~~was~~ who had been arrested, was being taken to the county seat for trial. He had killed one of these young scoundrels who had been at his house had drunk & had insulted his daughters. A neighbor riding along by my side said that this farmer would have been acquitted if he had shot the youngster the first time he came to his house. He did not shoot soon enough to suit public sentiment.

7

It would be done, and it would quicken industry all along that road, and production. There are plenty of minerals and magnificent timber in abundance, and further it would increase the efforts for schools which will be feeders to the academies and high schools, the colleges and universities within reach.

"But," you say, "what has this to do with Texas?" The sort of work that I speak of, good roads and good education, will cure the Texas spirit. Much of that spirit comes from the necessity of a head of a family protecting his family. Some of us know, is inherited and there is nothing can root that out but the change of heart that comes with bona fide Christianity, or perhaps I had better say in a larger sense, with bona fide Godliness. The Jew and the Christian alike understand very well how to so train children as to crush out forever the Texas spirit. Every man of any prominence in the mountains, a prominence acquired by his physical prowess or his mental vigor, has a following of at least forty or fifty supporters. If two of these leaders get into a contest over politics, over the Union, over money matters, or over the misconduct of somebody on the one side or the other, a dispute leads to blows; blows lead to the use of arms, and wherever whisky is thrown in, moonshine or other the war is on and it will continue till one side or the other perishes. Fortunately there is a reverence for women and children and they are spared. Yet mothers and sisters, wives and sweethearts often urge on the contest. Some are very often

inspired in early childhood with a hatred ^{or} ~~and~~ spirit of revenge
 which is very hard to eradicate. It will be done as it is done
 everywhere ^{else} by more and more of the spirit of the Master which
 Mr. Lincoln so well understood when he gave such strong evidence
 of love, not only for those with whom he came in contact, but
 for his enemies.

I have given you pictures which you can use in illustration of this article.

Olin O. Howard

Major General U. S. Army, Retired,

P.S. Please return the pictures to me after
 use - O.O.H.

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