LIFE OF JOHN ROSS,

THE CHEROKEE CHIEF.

[FROM THE "COUNCIL FIRE."]

John Ross, the distinguished Cherokee chief, was a son of Daniel Ross and Mollie McDonald. His father was a Scotsman, and his mother the daughter of a Scotish trader and his Cherokee wife. John McDonald, father of Mollie, came to America in 1766, and soon afterwards became an Indian trader among the Cherokees. He married an Indian wife, and in 1770 settled with a small colony of Cherokees at Chickamauga. A few years later, Daniel Ross came down the Tennessee river in a flat-boat, loaded with goods, and finding it dangerous to attempt to pass what is known as the Suck and Boiling Pot in the Tennessee river, he landed at Brown's Ferry, near the Cherokee village of Siteco. The Indians were disposed to hostilities at first, but through the influence of McDonald, Ross and his party were kindly treated, and induced to locate. Daniel Ross rapidly rose in favor among the Cherokees, and enjoyed the utmost friendship of McDonald and his family.

A romantic incident, which was related to the writer by a descendant of Daniel Ross, and which has not been in print, occurred in the life of Ross a few years after his settlement among the Indians.

A rival trader, whose name has been forgotten, jealous of his popularity, succeeded, by false representations, in organizing a conspiracy to assassinate him. Mollie McDonald learned of the danger of the young Scotchman, and hid him in a cave on Lookout Mountain; she visiting him daily with provisions until the plot was exposed. The conspirators would have been put to death by the tribe, but for the interpositon of Ross himself, who took his revenge in marrying his preserver, the faithful Mollie. This union resulted in a family of nine children, of which John Ross was the second. He was born at Tuckertown, on the Coosa river, Alabama, Oct. 3d, 1790.

[illegible] children educated, asked permission of his people to employ a teacher, which, after being discussed in the Grand Council, was granted, and Mr. Ross engaged a man by the name of Barber Davis, to reside with him, and instruct his children. This was the first school established among the Cherokees.

John and his brother Lewis subsequently attended a popular school at Kingston, Tennessee, and John became clerk to a merchant of that place by the name of Clark, with whom he had boarded. John's mother died in Chatanooga, about the time he returned from Kingston, and his father sent him to Hagerstown, Maryland, in search of an aunt, of whom he had not heard for many years. The young man made this journey of nine hundred miles on horseback, alone, encamping at night wherever he could find a shelter. He found his aunt, and mounting her on horseback, brought her to his father's house in safety.

In 1812, the government desiring to send presents to the Cherokees who resided west of the Mississippi rive, to keep them from joining the hostiles, Col. Miegs, the Indian Agent, employed an interpreter named Riley to take charge of them. The great earthquake at New Madrid so frightened Riley and his party that they returned, leaving the goods. Col. Miegs now sent John Ross on this mission. At Taurie's Ferry, he met Isaac Brownlow, a boatman, and uncle of the famous Governor Brownlow, who swore at Col. Miegs for sending any man on such a perilous voyage. He went with him eighty miles, gave him a better boat, and bade him adieu. On arriving at Memphis, he learned that the Cherokees he was seeking had removed to the Dardanelles on the Arkansas river, to which point he at once set out. He performed his mission faithfully, though exposed for months to extreme hardship and peril. On his return, in April, he found the Creek war just breaking out, and the Cherokees furnished a regiment of men to aid General Jackson. Col. White commanded this regiment, with John Ross as his adjutant.

The treaty that followed this war was not satisfactory to the Cherokees, and John Ross visited Washington, and laying the facts before the President and Secretary of War, succeeded in getting the matter adjusted to suit him. This probably irritated General Jackson, he having made the treaty; and in the treaty with the Chickasaws, Jackson took sides against the Cherokees.

In 1816, General Jackson was commissioned to treat with the Cherokees, and John Ross was to represent his people. Before any treaty could be agreed upon, Ross was called to Washington and Baltimore to purchase goods for his store at Rossville. During his absence, Jackson prepared the treaty of 1817, and called a council of the tribe to ratify it. Ross went simply as a spectator. The council met at Oasteanahe, the capital of the nation, and was composed of sixteen leading men and the chiefs. Ross, though but twenty-seven years of age, and not a member of the council at this time, was elected President. He was greatly surprised, when informed of the honor conferred upon him.

This treaty provided that the Cherokees who would remove west of the Mississippi should have lands there, and those who remained were to come under the laws of the State, and that they should give up as much land there as was occupied west. Ross opposed this treaty, and delivered the views of his people. In the meantime, through the connivance of Governor McMin, the Cherokee country was being filled up by squatters. Ross visited Washington and secured a provision in the new treaty, binding the government to remove these squatters. General Jackson was instructed to do this, but refused on the pretence of not having any men to spare for that duty.

The work of expelling the whites that had floated in with the intention of robbing the Indians of their homes devolved finally upon the Cherokee Light Horse, the chief command being given to John Ross. He did his work well. Almost everywhere the squatters, and their families, left on the approach of Ross and his Indian troop, who had only to burn their cabins to prevent their return. At Crow Island they found a hundred armed men, who surrendered to Ross without firing a shot.

John Ross was elected joint chief with William Hicks in 1827, and in 1828 he was elected principal chief, to which high office he was re-elected ten successive times, his service covering a period of forty years, and closing only with his earthly career. Of his great services to his people; and to the government also, we should be glad to speak in detail, did space permit. After finding it impossible to protect the Cherokees from the aggressions of the whites, with the as they were by the State and National authorities, he led the Cherokees across the Father of Waters, and through Arkansas, to the Promised Land, the beautiful Oklahoma (home of the red man), secured to this people by the celebrated treaty of 1835.

The Indian exodus was not so long or so disastrous as that of the Israelites, but it was tedious and sad enough. It was a journey of months, and the line of march was strewn with the bones of the hapless pilgrims who perished by the way. It is estimated that of those who started, one-third died on the way, and were buried by their friends in the valleys and on the hills beside the lonely trail. The survivors, on reaching the Indian Territory, began at once to build homes and erect churches, school houses and mills. They had made great progress in civilization and prosperity prior to 1861. They were a wealthy and happy people before the war cloud of secession swept over them. The war ruined them. The whole country was laid waste, and over one-third of the people perished in battle or from the privations incident to the war. The Cherokees were divided in sentiment, a majority being in sympathy with the North, but a large and respectable minority favoring the South. John Ross first sought to have his people remain neutral, but on finding this impossible, he threw the weight of his influence in favor of the Union, and a larger number of soldiers were furnished by the Cherokee nation to the Federal Army, in proportion to population, than were furnished by any State in the Union. When the war actually began in his country, Col. Cloud, of the Second Kansas Regiment, marched down to Park Hill, the residence of John Ross, with five hundred men, half of whom were Cherokees, and informing the old chief that the rebels were upon him, escorted him and his family out of the country. His house, with all its contents, including his elegant library and immense quantities of wampum and other relics, belonging to his own and other tribes, was destroyed by fire.

Mr. Ross owned a residence in Philadelphi, purchased some years before, and here he resided during the war; spending much of his time in Washington, watching the intersts of his people.

He died in the city of Washington on the 1st of August, 1866, after a brief illness, while in the discharge of his duties at the head of the Cherokee delegation.

John Ross was twice married.—First to a Cherokee woman by the name of Elizabeth, who bore him four sons and a daughter. Mrs. Ross died in 1839, during the exodus from the East to the Indian Territory. In 1844, Mr. Ross was married to Mary B. Stapler, of Philadelphia, a lady of good family, and excellent qualities. One son and one daughter resulted from this marriage.

John Ross was a large slave-holder before the war, but he and his people emancipated their slaves before President Lincoln's proclamation had been issued. It is estimated that his loss of property by the war, including the value of his slaves, would foot up $150,000.

He enjoyed an extensive acquaintance with public men, and numbered among his personal friends such men as Clay, Webster and Calhoun; all of whom have borne testimony to his great ability as a diplomatist and statesman.

Prescriptions for Fits.

FOR A FIT OF PASSION.—Walk out in the open air. You may speak your mind to the winds without hurting any one, or proclaiming yourself to be a simpleton. "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools."

FOR A FIT OF IDLENESS.—Count the tickings of a clock. Do this for one hour; and you will be glad to pull off your coat the next and work like a man. "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger."

FOR A FIT OF EXTRAVAGANCE AND FOLLY.—Go to the work-house, or speek with the ragged and wretched inmates of a jail, and you will be convinced

Who makes his bead of briar and thoru
Must be content to lie forlorn.

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?"

FOR A FIT OF AMBITION.—Go to the church-yard and read the gravestones. They will tell you the end of man at his best estate. "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

FOR A FIT OF REPINING.—Look about for the halt and the blind, and visit the bed-ridden, the afflicted, and you shamed or complaining of your light afflictions. "Wherefore doth a living man complain?"

FOR A FIT OF ENVY.—Go and see how many who keep their carriages are afflicted with rheumatism, gout and dropsy; how many walk abroad on crutches or stay at home wrapped up in a flannel; and how many are subject to epilepsy and apoplexy. "A sound heart is the life of the flesh. Envy is the rottenness of the bones."

A curious controversy over a woman's heart has arisen at Nice. An American lady who had been converted to Roman Catholicism, left $60,000 to the Church of Father Lavigne on condition that she should be buried within the precincts of the edifice. The municipal authorities opposed such a step as being against the health regulations but the ecclesiastical legatees thought to get over the difficulty by burying the heart only in the church. The family, however, would not permit the body to be cut.

The Rev. B. M. Palmer, of New Orleans, it is said, rarely consents to take a vacation, and when pressed to, makes his arrangements so that he may get back to his people before the sickly season begins. After his settlement in that city in 1857, he organized the young men of his church into a brotherhood, to assist in caring for and nursing the sick who were strangers in the city, while he himself visited from house to house, inquiring for any one who were sick, but had no physician or nurse to attend to them.

A country deacon went on a free ticket to a circus entertainment. His pastor remonstrated with him on the wickedness of so doing. But he made answer: "Why, you see, pastor, I had a dead-head ticket, and thought it my bounden duty to go and keep somebody out of that seat who might have been harmed by the circus.

Cremation is favored by the medical fraternity of New Orleans. The nature of the soil about the city is such that only the poor are interred in the earth, most bodies being deposited in tombs raised above the surface. There are several cemeteries within the limits of the city still used.

A boy can play base-ball all day exposed to the burning rays of the sun and turn up next morning bright and smiling as a new three-cent piece, but send him on an errand and even though the distance be only two blocks he will return with all the symptoms of sunstroke.

Mary L. Booth, the accomplished editor of Harper's Bazar, receives a salary of $5,000 per annum.