

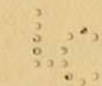


Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library

THE
LOUISIANA PURCHASE

AND ITS FIRST EXPLORER

ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE



ADDRESS BY

HON. ALVA ADAMS
OF PUEBLO, COLO.

Before the Students and Faculty of Colorado College,
Colorado Springs, Colo.

JULY 12th, 1894

F353
A21

The first edition was exhausted long ago,
and this edition is printed to satisfy the fre-
quent requests for copies, due to the interest
in Pike, excited by the pending Pike Centen-
nial Celebration.

A. A.

Pueblo, Aug. 22, 1906.

IN EXCHANGE

N. Y. State Library.

Je 18 1906

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

AND ITS FIRST EXPLORER

ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE

At the opening of the nineteenth century Europe was one vast military camp. Upon the crimson crest of revolution Napoleon had ridden into power. The destinies of France were placed in his hands; and he led the devoted nation where he willed. The ambitious Corsican aimed not alone to control the nations of the old world, but he dreamed as well of empire in the new land that lay beyond the western sea.

The gateway to the interior of the American continent was guarded by a French city. Over two centuries before, French explorers had driven the prows of their adventurous ships upon the coast of Louisiana, and in her soil planted a mighty cross and to it nailed the arms of France. Until 1762 the Lilies of France guided the infant destinies of the forest empire. In that year, defeated by England

in their rivalry for dominion in America, France—with the art of a tricky bankrupt—sought out a preferred creditor and by secret treaty ceded Louisiana to Spain. For thirty-eight years the new land languished under the blight of Spanish rule. Then, in return for Tuscany, Spain gave back to France the title deeds of Louisiana.

Three years later, when preparing for war with England, need of money and the danger of Louisiana falling a prize to the naval supremacy of England forced Napoleon to give up his dream of a great Mississippi colony, and Louisiana was sold to Jefferson. No one, not even Jefferson, realized as fully as did the French emperor the value of that which he sold. The price was sixteen millions, twelve millions cash and four millions to pay claims of American citizens for French spoliation. It was, as Napoleon said, “a magnificent bargain; an empire for a trifle.” He also said: “A day may come when the cession of Louisiana to the United States shall render the Americans too powerful for the continent of Europe.” “I have given to England a rival that will humble her pride.”

How different the voice of American statesmanship! Seldom has the tongue of an American been touched with the spirit of prophecy when casting the horoscope of the West. Napoleon could better read the stars that told the destiny of western greatness.

Jefferson realized that the nation that held the mouth of the Mississippi must be the enemy of the United States. He wanted freedom of the great river; but the empire to which his purchase led cast no rays upon his horizon. After the treaty was

made, Jefferson said of Louisiana that "it was a barren sand; individuals will not buy; we gain nothing but peace."

The Federalists denounced the purchase as corrupt and unconstitutional, and voted against the ratification of the treaty. New England denounced it as an illegal interference with the future balance of power of New England. When a Tennessee member of congress proposed a survey of some portions of the new purchase a member from New England made it the text for the following bitter assault: "No act of Jefferson's administration presents such a variety of disgraceful features as this shameful purchase of a colony of Frenchmen. In its origin it was corrupt; in its principles hostile to constitution and republican habits. It has swallowed up millions aside from the vast sums required to explore its unknown frontier. The origin of this monstrous purchase, the effect of which will be felt to our latest posterity, was to give free navigation of Mississippi to the backwoodsmen of the western states."

This spirit did not die. When, on January 15, 1811, the bill for the admission of Louisiana as a state was being considered, Josiah Quincy, who two years later left congress to become president of Harvard College, opposed the admission of the new state in these picturesque sentiments:

"The illegal purchase of Louisiana had unsettled the foundations of the government, and no state formed from the illegal territory could enter the Union or become equal with the original states. I am compelled to declare it as my deliberate opinion that if this bill admitting Louisiana as a state

passes, the bonds of the Union are virtually dissolved; and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some to prepare definitely for a separation—amicably if they can; violently if they must. We have no right to throw the rights, liberties and property of original states into hotch-pot with wild men of Missouri, nor with the mixed though more respectable race of Anglo-Spanish Americans. It was not for these men our fathers fought; it was not for them this constitution was adopted.”

From these quotations we can see that South Carolina was not the first state to preach the gospel of secession.

Years later, when the Oregon question was before the people, William Sturgiss, in a lecture before the Mercantile Library Association of Boston, said: “Better the Pacific extend to the Rocky Mountains than to have the Oregon country converted into new states.”

In the light of the present, these assaults upon and evil predictions concerning the west are as full of humor as the fight of Cervantes' hero with the windmills. They show the pessimist of our day that angelic wings were as short and rare on the shoulders of our noble ancestors as with the statesmen of to-day. Our nation has grown in breadth and power, but human nature has changed but little. Distance has wreathed the past with all the charms of its enchantment, so that to our gaze every actor on the early stage of our history bears the character and proportions of a demigod and a hero, and their deeds in the political arena stamping their times as

the golden age of statesmanship. Yet, in truth, men were as bitter, partisan, selfish and narrow then as now. Time and tombstones are ever kind.

In the history of American progress there are but one or two events as important as the purchase of Louisiana. In the annals of mankind there have been few triumphs of warrior or statesman that have been so pregnant with the seeds of a great and a beneficent destiny. Yet was it attained with no stain of blood or crash of battle.

At midday in New Orleans, on December 20, 1803, the French and American flags passed each other, as the one was lowered and the other raised. There was no other ceremony to mark the great event. No cheering multitude. No cannon awoke the echoes of the surrounding solitude. No orator indulged in partiotic prophecy. There was no comment, no music, no emotion. Thus simply an empire passed from the dominion of France and became a part of the glory and grandeur of the American republic.

By this transfer the public domain was widely extended—almost beyond known limits.

In order to learn more of the new land, Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike was placed in charge of an exploring party to explore the headwaters of the Mississippi river. So satisfactorily did Pike perform this service that upon his return from the north he was selected by General Wilkinson to command a party that should explore the Arkansas and Red rivers—the intent being to ascend the Arkansas to its source, and then pass over to the Red river and return home by that stream. It is with this last expedition that we will travel.

On January 24, 1806, Lieutenant Pike started from Belle Fontaine, a village a few miles above St. Louis. The expedition comprised twenty three men—officers and soldiers. Their equipments consisted of the ordinary effects of a company of infantry. General Wilkinson issued six hundred dollars in value of merchandise, which was to be an expense and trading fund for this company of explorers. Pike was admonished to be careful in spending his supplies, as he would be held to a strict accountability for every farthing expended. Wilkinson evidently expected Pike to have the financial wisdom and business qualities of a Methodist bishop aside from his attainments as soldier and explorer. The contrast between government supplies then and now is vivid. To-day when a committee from congress is sent out on a visit of friendly inspection to some western agency or post, the liquors, cigars and luxuries that are loaded on their Pullman car cost more than the entire expense of this band of explorers, who were to travel an indefinite time in an unknown and savage wilderness. The effects of the company were loaded into two crude boats. When ready to start, fifty-one Osage Indians were placed in Pike's charge. These he was to escort to their homes on the headwaters of the Osage river. The Indians walked along the banks of the river, as did some of the men, hunting as they went, to supply food for the party. The party passed up the Missouri and Osage rivers, and in due time arrived at the Indian village, where they delivered the Indians to their friends. After trading for horses, supplies and arranging for guides, they left the boats and crossed the country to the Arkansas.

Pike kept a daily record, noting the country, weather and all incidents he considered valuable or interesting. As a literary work, Pike's diary may not rank very high; but as the narration of a sincere and patriotic soldier it will ever hold a place in the esteem of those who admire the straightforward story of a simple and brave man.

As the record of Colorado's discoverer, the journal of the man who built the first house and raised the first American flag upon the domain of our present state, I commend the perusal of his book to every citizen that loves his state.

Aside from his duty as explorer, Pike was instructed to visit the Pawnee and other Indian tribes and to make treaties of peace and alliance with them. This was not always easy to accomplish.

Not long before a splendid troop of Spanish cavalry, coming from Santa Fe, had passed through this same region upon a similar errand. In anticipation of boundary disputes arising between Spain and the United States, the Spaniards made an effort to form friendly alliances with the Indians. This troop was a magnificent body of men, five hundred strong. Every soldier was mounted on a milk white steed, while the commander and his two aides rode jet black stallions. This cavalcade of Spaniards had been lavish in presents to the chiefs. They left medals and flags of the Spanish king. The Indians had been much impressed with the superb uniforms, with the glitter and the boast of the Spanish officers. They were, indeed, in strange contrast with the sorry equipments and number of the American soldiers. It required much diplomacy to induce them to surrender the Spanish emblem and receive the Stars and

Stripes. Often the small troop was in imminent danger, but the wonderful coolness, courage and decision of their leader saved them. With the Indians Pike was exacting, but just. As he wrote, "His experience had taught him that if you have justice on your side and do not enforce it, the Indians will universally despise you."

The Pawnees he found very reluctant to accept his tenders of peace and protection. They had been fascinated and flattered with the attention and magnificence of the Spaniards, and they sought no alliance with any power less splendid. Like most primitive people, the Indians judged the king by his ambassador; the sender of a message by the display of the messenger that brought it. They looked with contempt upon this American captain, who wore the dress of a hunter; who carried packs and pioneered the trail. Like the Jews of old, they were disappointed in appearances and scoffed at Pike as being the representative of a mighty power, whose ambassador he claimed to be. Proud of their many hundred warriors, these Pawnees refused to treat or smoke. They gathered their warriors in battle array and threatened to sweep the little band of whites from the earth. But when they saw no fear or signs of retreat, but instead the most cool and determined preparations to meet their assaults, they changed their mind, and, under a flag of truce, offered the calumet. In writing of this event, Pike writes as though he was a little disappointed that the Pawnees did not carry out their intention to fight, "as he had arranged his small troop so as to kill at least one hundred of the Indians before they could have been exterminated."

Day by day they press up the Arkansas. At first, on either hand great rolling prairies, and then the ocean-like plains. He is amazed at the vast herds of buffalo, deer, elk and other game. A single hunter could supply a small army with food; but as a matter of humanity he forbids the killing of more game than required. Were it not that some of our living citizens have seen on the same plains herds of buffalo that were limited only by the horizon's line, and had felt the earth shake beneath their myriad tread, we might question the estimate Pike gives of the game he saw.

As Pike enters the buffalo country, he comments freely upon the barrenness and desolation. He forgets that game could not be so plentiful if the land were so desolate. So impressed was he with the worthlessness of the plains, that when, reviewing his travels across them, he said: "The plains may in time become equally celebrated with the deserts of Africa. From these immense prairies may arise one great advantage to the United States by the restricting of our population to some certain limits, and thereby insuring a continuation of the Union. Our citizens through necessity will be constrained to limit their extent on the west to the Mississippi and Missouri, leaving the prairies—incapable of cultivation—to the uncivilized aborigines."

Pike, Quincy, Webster and other of our famed ancestors were great explorers and statesmen, but as prophets they were failures. After many days the mountains burst upon the vision of the explorers. To the left a pair of twin peaks cut the horizon; to the right, a mighty single mountain stood like a sentinel upon the boundary of plain and mountain.

From the first sight of the grand peak it became the pole star—the compass of the explorer. During all his wanderings over plain and mountain he was seldom out of sight of the great mountain which he called his friend and guide, and a grateful people have made it his monument—one that will carry the name of Pike down the stream of time. Seldom have peaks been so royally named; seldom have heroes been worthy so lofty a commemoration.

When Pike reached the mouth of the Fountaine, and where Pueblo now stands, he established camp; built a rude temporary stockade, and over it raised the first American flag that had ever been kissed by the radiant sun and floated upon the crystal air of the Rocky Mountains. Considering it his duty as an explorer to ascend a peak that was such a prominent feature of the landscape, Pike, with several soldiers, took an early start one morning from his Pueblo camp, so that he might reach and climb the peak and return to camp in reasonable time. To their infinite surprise, the second day had well near passed before they came to the south end of Cheyenne Mountain. In this incident you will find the germ of that ancient story that is told to and about every tenderfoot that has visited this region since the days of Pike. It was near the first of December, and a winter of deep snow and intense cold. They had no blankets and little food, but they determined to attempt the ascent. After the best part of two days' struggling through the snow, they found themselves upon the top of the great ridge which, west of Cheyenne, leads up to the peak. They were in snow to their waists, and the mercury below zero. Still the peak, in its soaring grandeur, seemed as distant as ever. This led Pike to say

that it seemed impossible that human foot could ever press its summit. To him it was as though the Almighty had marked "no thoroughfare" upon its rugged heights and eternal snows. As his men were without food, and dressed only in army overalls, shoes without stockings, no blankets or overcoats, he decided it folly to go farther, and ordered a return. Two days later they were in camp at Pueblo.

This was the first attempt to scale Pike's Peak, and that was as near as Pike ever came to its summit. Sixteen years later, Dr. James and others of Long's exploring party ascended the Peak in midsummer. It is a different task climbing Colorado mountains in August than in December.

In honor of this first ascent Long gave the name of James to the peak, and that is the name it bears in early government maps and reports. Pike gave it no specific name, and just when the name of James was dropped and it was christened Pike is one of the historical mysteries. I question whether it was ever legally baptized Pike. Trappers, traders and early voyagers across the plains resented the apparent slight to Pike and persisted in speaking of the mountain as Pike's Peak, in defiance of government reports and the envy of rival explorers. The name of Pike's Peak begins to appear in the literature of the prairies and mountains about the middle of the century, but it was not irrevocably christened until the Pike's Peak gold excitement, when the name was fixed to remain as long as men love to listen to stories of valor; as long as history is written.

From Pueblo Pike passed up to the soda springs at Canon. The walls of the Grand Canon prevented his following the course of the Arkansas. From

here he drifted over the divide into South Park and upon the waters of the Platte. He recognized the streams as tributary to the Platte. He came into the Arkansas valley again near Buena Vista. He wandered west over routes we cannot identify until he must have found the Tomichi, a tributary of the Gunnison, and the only time Pike touched Pacific waters. He recognized that this stream running west could not be the Red he sought, and turned east and south. After a month of incredible exposure, hardship and suffering, he came back to his camp at Canon. His horses had been killed or disabled; his men were worn and frozen, weak and faint from exposure and starvation; his supplies exhausted; guns injured and broken. During this terrible month of wandering in the wintry mountains the Christmas holidays and Pike's twenty-eighth birthday were passed. Christmas they spent in the heart of the mountains. They were almost starving and in a strange and wintry land. Yet this heroic man writes in his journal on that Christmas day "that food and diet were beneath the serious consideration of men who explore new countries." So often were their rations scant that "his men thought themselves fortunate with having plenty of buffalo meat without salt or any other thing whatever." As he was in camp celebrating this holiday he writes of the condition of his men: "Not one person was properly clothed for winter; many without blankets, having been obliged to cut them up for socks and other articles; laying down at night upon the snow or wet ground, one side burning, the other pierced with the wind, the men making a miserable substitute for shoes and other covering out of raw buffalo hide."

At Canon camp they remained five days to recruit the strength of their men, and to make other necessary preparations for an assault against the mountains to the west, which was the barrier that they supposed hid the river they sought. When leaving Canon, the party was on foot, the horses living being in no condition to travel. The luggage was divided, giving seventy pounds to each man.

From Canon they started up Grape creek. After two or three days they entered Wet Mountain valley. Snow fell, covering the country to a depth of two to three feet. Most of the game had been driven out of the mountains, and the party was soon in a desperate condition, frost and hunger making sad havoc. On January 17 nine of the men had their feet frozen, among them the hunters. They had been two days without food, so a camp was made, and Pike and Dr. Robinson—his friend and companion—went out to hunt. The first day they killed nothing. Night came on and they thought it useless to go to camp and add to the general gloom, so took shelter under some rocks, where they remained all night, hungry and without cover or rest, as the cold was too intense to permit sleep. Next day they got eight shots at a buffalo, but failed to kill. Here, for the first time in his career, Pike weakened in courage. They had been four days without food, and the helpless men depending upon them. All these four days without sleep and tramping the deep snow, they were weak and faint, and it looked as though fate had decreed that the expedition should end in tragedy. They sought a small grove, determined to remain absent and die by themselves rather than return to camp and witness the misery of their com-

panions. Just as they had made this resolution of despair, they discovered at a distance several buffalo. Hope at once took command, and with great exertion they crept through the snow and succeeded in killing a buffalo. At midnight they returned to camp with the food that saved the lives of the men and the exploration from tragic failure.

On January 21 two men—Thomas Dougherty and John Sparks—were so badly frozen that they could not travel. A cruel alternative was forced upon the leader. For all to remain with the poor cripples was almost equivalent to deciding that all must perish. The two were left. They gathered wood and left what meat remained with the poor men. After bidding them show their fortitude and bear up until help could be sent back, the party pushed on. A day or so later another man—Menaugh—became helpless, and he was left alone—not even the consolation of a comrade.

In all the danger and risk of exploration, be it in mountain land or polar ice, I know of nothing more terrible and desperate than the condition of these poor men left to fight the awful perils of a severe winter in the unknown mountain land. They were helpless; they could not hunt or fight; they could not retreat or go on. Their agony and suspense cannot be measured by words. I know of no parallel, unless it be in the solitary leper camps in the wintry solitudes of the Siberian forests.

On January 24 the condition of the party again became desperate—no food, and heavy snow through which they beat their slow and painful march. On this day Pike heard the first complaint that had ever fallen from the lips of his men. To illustrate the

man as a soldier and a disciplinarian, I will give this incident. Floundering through the snow, famished from want of food, private Brown scolded and said "that it was more than human nature could bear to march three days without food through snows three feet deep and carry burdens only fit for horses."

Pike passed over the sedition at the moment, but that evening, after the company had broken their long fast and eaten their fill of game the doctor had been so fortunate as to kill, Pike called Brown and addressed him as follows:

"Brown, you this day presumed to make use of language that was seditious and mutinous. I then passed it over, pitying your condition and attributing your conduct to your distress. Had I reserved provisions for ourselves, whilst you were starving; had we been marching along light and at our ease, whilst you were weighed down with your burden, then you would have some pretext for your observations. But when we were equally hungry, weary, emaciated and charged with burdens which, I believe, my natural strength is less able to bear than any man's in the party, when we are always foremost in breaking the road, reconnoitering and enduring the fatigues of the chase, it was the height of ingratitude for you to indicate discontent. Your ready compliance and firm perseverance I had reason to expect, as the leader of men who are my companions in misery and danger. But your duty as a soldier called on your obedience to your officer and a prohibition of such language, which, for this time, I will pardon; but assure you, should it ever be repeated, by instant *death* I will revenge your ingratitude and punish your disobedience."

Two days later Pike stood upon the summit of Medano or Music Pass and looked out upon the San Luis valley. After his experience it is no marvel that it seemed to him to be "a terrestrial paradise shut in from the sight of man." They hastened down the pass, skirted the range of sand hills, crossed the valley, arriving at the Rio Grande near where Alamosa stands, passed down the river a few miles to the mouth of the Conejos, up which stream they went a short distance to the warm springs, near where Judge McIntire now has his ranch and home. Here Pike determined to establish a camp and build a fort. As soon as his camp was located he sent a corporal and men to bring in the frozen men that had been cached in the mountains.

In due time they returned, bringing in Menaugh, the man left alone on January 27. Dougherty and Sparks were still unable to travel and could not be brought. As the corporal was leaving them they gave him a handful of bones (taken from their frozen feet) to be delivered to Pike as silent messages of appeal that he would not forget or abandon them.

Pike explored the surrounding valley and kept his men busy building the stockade.

On February 16 two Spanish scouts appeared. They went direct to Santa Fe to report the presence of American soldiers on Spanish territory.

Ten days later one hundred Spanish or Mexican soldiers present their compliments to the American captain. They bore an invitation to visit Governor Allencaster at Santa Fe. Pike was reluctant, but they were persistent in their offer of hospitality, offering money, horses, supplies, everything, but in-

sisting upon Pike visiting the governor, giving as an excuse for insisting the clumsy fable that they had learned of the intention of the Utah Indians to surprise and capture Pike, and that they could not permit a representative of the United States to submit himself to so great danger.

In discussing the matter, the Spanish captain informed Pike that he was upon the Rio Grande and not upon the Red. Pike then pulled down his flag and realized that he was a prisoner, no matter how they might cushion the fact with offers of friendly hospitality. Pike said he would visit the governor, but that he must wait until he could bring in his invalid men. This was adjusted by leaving fifty of the Spanish soldiers to wait, while the balance of the troop escorted Pike to Santa Fe.

He is entertained by Governor Allencaster and maintains himself with becoming dignity. In fact, he never forgets that he represents the United States, and always insists that the Spanish officials recognize in him the power of his government. When presented at the little court at Santa Fe, Pike was much chagrined at the appearance of himself and men. As he described their clothes, Pike was dressed in a pair of blue trousers, moccasins, coat made out of a blanket, and a red cap made of scarlet cloth and lined with fox skins; the men in raw buffalo moccasins and leggings, breech cloths, leather coats and not a hat in the party. A native, looking upon their motley raiment, asked if the people in the United States did not wear hats and regular clothes. Under such conditions it would take a keen eye to see the hero.

After entertaining the American the governor said Pike must go into the interior until he could receive instructions from higher authorities. The leader and men were allowed their arms and, though carefully guarded, they were treated with consideration. Pike seemed rather pleased at the new orders, as it gave him an opportunity to see the Spanish territory. In case he was ill-treated, he had determined to drive off the guards, and then go into the Apache country and defy the Spaniards.

They passed through Albuquerque and El Paso and across the Rio Grande into Old Mexico to Chihuahua, south along the great table land, until May 21, when, under new instructions, they turned east and north, crossed the country to Monterey, Laredo and to San Antonio, the capital of the Spanish province of Texas. Here Pike was entertained in the most friendly manner by two courtly Spanish governors. An escort was provided, which accompanied him across Texas and delivered him to the American frontier on the Red river.

Here ended the memorable expedition of Pike to the Rocky Mountains.

Connected with this exploration were several incidents that are not free from mystery, and may well serve as hooks upon which the ambitious historian may hang his romantic theories.

About the time this expedition was organized the Burr conspiracy was in the minds of the people. There was much feeling between the settlers west of the Allegheny Mountains and the states east. Nearly all of the prominent men of the west were under suspicion. General Wilkinson, then in command of the western army, has been proven by recently dis-

covered documents to have been a "rascal through and through." He was in sympathy and perhaps in the confidence of Burr. Wearing the uniform and sword of an American officer, he was in the pay of Spain, and conspired to create out of the colonies west of the mountains a Spanish empire. It was Wilkinson who sent Pike west; but no matter how guilty may have been his superior in command, Pike certainly had no knowledge of his schemes. Pike was innocent of any stain. He was a patriot as pure and sincere as Wilkinson was a traitor base and ungrateful.

When Pike returned to his country the Burr conspiracy had exploded, and its leader was on trial for his life at Richmond. The relations between the United States and Spain were very much strained. Our nation was a growing power; Spain in its decadence. Any accident that might lead to a conflict that would drive Spain from the continent would not have been regarded by Americans as an unmixed evil.

Some careful students of American history entertain the theory that Pike had secret instructions to spy out the land and not to be too particular in recognizing the territorial claims of Spain. It is not entirely clear that Pike was as innocent as he professed of his whereabouts when captured in the San Luis valley. Some believe that he knew he was upon the Rio Grande and not upon the Red, as he pretended to believe. But had it been the Red instead of the Rio Grande, what right had he to be on the south side of the river, his rude fort being several miles south of the stream and under an abeyance treaty upon forbidden ground. The Spaniards

believed that Pike carried secret orders to intrude upon their territory. However, they could not trick him into any admissions, and though they secretly searched his baggage and clothing, they found nothing. Certainly his conduct was well poised for an accidental invader. When building his fort he was apparently as much expecting the Spaniards as surprised when they did come. He was a very willing prisoner, and his attitude was always that of a man who was sure of the endorsement of his country. If the Spaniards were right and Pike did have secret instructions, they came from Washington, and the secret is buried with the authority that gave them and the faithful soldier that received them. The Spaniards could get no hint, though they led Pike a prisoner guest through their country, and finally delivered him upon his own frontier without apology or explanation.

The government never had a more discreet or patriotic representative—a man of indomitable will and of rare personal courage.

In nearly every man there is a strain of barbarism, a lingering hint of a bygone ancestry, that sometimes, when remote from civilization, will assert itself. Pike was ever proof against the charms of savagery. He was ever a soldier, whether in camp, in wilderness or city. No El Dorado, no Spring of Youth, no dream of wealth, led him into the unknown. He had no idol but his country. Patriotic duty was the polar star that guided his career.

Amid our surroundings, touched upon every side with comfort and luxury, it is not possible to paint a true picture of this region as it was when

these brave men came to explore and suffer. With the courage, strength and endurance weakened—if not civilized and cultured out of the present generation—we cannot realize how men could willingly face the hazard of an expedition so far from settlement or help. There was no certainty but of hardship and danger; no reward, but the miserable pittance of a soldier's pay; no hope of glory or fame—800 miles from outposts of their country, and that distance peopled with all the danger that could assail the fears, comfort and life. Their numbers few, equipments scanty, commissary their own skill as hunters; no refuge from savage assaults; no friends in reach; no help in danger; no shelter in storm; no medicine in illness; never men more dependent upon themselves; never men more competent to care for themselves.

Poetry and romance never wove a more pathetic and pitiable story of exposure and misery, of hunger and frozen limbs, than the sufferings of Pike and his little band in the Rocky Mountains. It is a rare lesson of courage and patriotic sacrifice.

The biography of our hero remains unwritten. A land is rich in heroism that can afford to let such lives go unmarked. Edward Everett Hale has half promised that he will weave the life and deeds of Pike into one of his brilliant books. The subject is worthy even of Dr. Hale's genius. Pike was not one of those characters designated by Irving as "Sinbads of the wilderness," but a man of high purpose and exalted character. Courage so undaunted, a patriotism so lofty, adventures so wild and strange need no color of romance.

His years were few, but full of achievement. He died a brigadier general at thirty-four. He was killed while in command at the siege of York—now Toronto—April 27, 1813. As he fell mortally wounded, the enemy sounded a retreat. Their flag was captured and brought to the dying general. He grasped the captured banner, placed it beneath his head, and, like Wolfe, died the death of a soldier. The last sound that broke upon his fading senses was the song of victory.

When he fell upon the Canadian battle field his note book was crimsoned with his life blood. That book contained his inheritance to his young son. It was not wealth; it was not title deeds to vast estates, but it was more precious than either. It was two rules for the guidance of his son's life. They were: First—"Preserve your honor from blemish." Second—"To be ready at all times to die for your country." Typical were they of the life of the father—a worthy inheritance to every American youth.

May each of you, as morning and evening you look upon the magnificent mountain that guards your beautiful city and crowns our land, not only drink in the scenic beauty and grandeur, but think as well of the brave soldier, pure patriot and noble man whose name it bears, remembering that—

“His life was his country's;
His deeds were all his own.”

ALVA ADAMS.



Nancy
Hanks
Lincoln
Public
Library