

HON. JOHN KELLY.—Prominent in almost every department of business and public life, Honorable John Kelly is known throughout the length and breadth of our state as a man of great abilities and irreproachable integrity. As a pioneer, none has a more deserving record, nor has sustained a more honorable part. Born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1818, he crossed the Atlantic to Canada in 1838, and in 1840 came to Franklin, Vermont. Three years later he began a career at the West, coming to Wisconsin, and, there exercising his natural bent for business and capacity for organization, by which he has been distinguished, established a small woolen factory. But, finding the conditions unfavorable for a business of the dimensions that he desired to control, he sold out his interest and removed to St. Louis, seeking a wider opportunity.

There he was led by his love of adventure to enlist for service in the Mexican war. In January of 1848 he was quartered with his regiment at Fort Leavenworth; and not until June following was the command ready to move to the seat of war. While *en route*, at Santa Fé, news was received that the war was over; and the regiment was ordered back to Jefferson Barracks. In 1849 Mr. Kelly received an appointment as wagon-master in the battalion of Colonel Loring to proceed to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia. Experiencing cholera on the plains of the Nebraska, and, as drover of the companies loose stock, to which he had been subsequently assigned, meeting with unreasonable treatment, he disconnected himself from the train this side of Fort Hall, and came with his own ponies to Oregon City.

Being precisely the man to be attracted by the great enterprises in the California mines, he was ready in 1850 for a journey thither in company with Major Thorpe, Mr. Chambers and others; and his

years of adventure in the mountains and valleys of Southern Oregon and Northern California, a recital of which would fill many pages of such a work as this, were a succession of upward steps towards a competency. Many of his experiences were very amusing, and were enjoyed at the time with all the hearty goodwill and pleasure of robust manhood, and a temper notably jovial. On Jump-off-joe creek, he had his clothes stolen by a "jewel" of an Indian boy, retaining only his elk-skin trousers and hickory shirt. By this misfortune, however, he was pleasantly—albeit humorously—introduced to General Lane and Captain Phil Thompson, whom he found on Bear creek, and by whom his wardrobe was replenished. Captain Thompson moreover had a band of cattle that he was driving to California, but, desiring to return to the Willamette valley, was willing to dispose of them. Receiving the offer, Mr. Kelly felt unable to close the bargain for lack of means; but this was construed by the Captain as no objection, and a personal note, without the indorsement of General Lane, which was freely offered, was deemed amply sufficient.

Continuing his journey southward, and crossing the Siskiyou Mountains with his cavalcade (for he had now some forty Klikitat and Mollala Indians as herders), a beginning in mining was made on the Klamath river; but the site was abandoned for a better said to exist farther south. While on the move occurred one of those incidents so often met with in frontier life, and which make us wonder that so many of the pioneers lived through the early days: Two of the best horses were stolen by Indian thieves at the noon lunch; and Kelly and four others started in pursuit. The way proved difficult; and just at dusk the trail entered a narrow, rocky cañon. Here, sending back the horses with one man to the camp, the four continued the journey on foot, tramping until midnight, and then from an eminence scanning the country for the sign of a flame or smoke; for they believed that the thieves would at length make camp, and, owing to the cool air, kindle a fire.

At length, discovering a dull, red glare in the distance, they made towards it, and finally came upon a camp. Believing that they had overtaken the thieves they crept up close, with guns ready for use; but, not knowing how many Indians there might be, and not feeling ready to begin a promiscuous fight in the dark, they kept silent watch, waiting for the dawn. The brands of the campfire smoked; at last the starlight paled; and the gray twilight began to enter the shadows of the trees, disclosing the closely muffled forms of the doomed victims as they still lay by the ashes of their last night's fire. Kelly and his comrades crept nearer with guns in hand, and were just about to lay dead the miscreants who stole their horses. But, just at that moment, one of the "miscreants" raised his head and remarked in unmistakable Western English, "Well, boys, it is about time to get up and get breakfast." They were miners; and Kelly and his men were not sorry, even though they discovered themselves on the wrong trail for their horses. But if the miners had been happening to feel lazy that morning, and had waited to take a

second nap, how shocking must have been the result. Of course a hilarious breakfast was enjoyed; and Kelly's party, having so far missed the thieves, gave up the chase and returned to their cavalcade. Some time after, a similar incident occurred in the night-time, when Angel and Kelly got up one night to shoot a prowling Indian; and incidentally the former signalized his feat by giving the war whoop, and only saved himself from being shot by his startled companion by calling out "I've killed a Digger."

It was not until the following spring that Mr. Kelly found a good opportunity to dispose of his cattle. During this season there was a great rush to the mines on the Trinity, Klamath and Scott rivers. In March, a very heavy snowstorm, such as sometimes visits Northern California, blocked all the trails, cutting off the supply of provisions; and the miners came out in great numbers on snowshoes, hungry, but well supplied with dust. Near the spot where Fort Jones was built somewhat later, Kelly with a partner named Brown had established a ranch, and there had his cattle corraled, and for a number of weeks butchered and sold his beef at a dollar a pound. During the following summer he was obliged to close out his interest, and returned to the Willamette valley in order to pay back the generous loan of Captain Thompson. His effort to re-establish a stock business proved unsuccessful, owing to the treachery of a man to whom he had paid five hundred dollars to hold his claim and build a corral, the man disappearing with the money, and leaving the site of the claim to another company, who were occupying it on his return.

Coming up to Oregon again, he found no location that pleased him more than the beautiful Umpqua valley. And there, a mile and a half south of Roseburg, he set his stakes and made one of the fine, old places of Southern Oregon. In 1853 he was married to Miss Elizabeth Parker, a daughter of the well-known Squire Parker, a pioneer of 1852. In 1861 he received the appointment as registrar of the United States land-office, and removed to Roseburg. In 1866 he removed to Lane county with a view of establishing an extensive business, but could not be relieved of his government position. President Johnson insisted upon his removal; but the Republican Senate refused to confirm a successor; and he was continued at the head of the Roseburg land district until the appointment of his successor by General Grant in 1869.

The milling business which he had established in 1866 at Springfield in Lane county, with Messrs. Underwood & Pengra, was continued until the dissolution of the partnership in 1872, when Mr. Kelly received as his share of the effects the fine tract of land, a portion of which is included in the townsite of Springfield. In 1876 he received the appointment as collector of customs of Portland, Oregon, and during his four-year term performed the duties of his office with fidelity, dignity and ability. In 1882 he was appointed by President Arthur to inspect the section of the Northern Pacific Railroad between Clarke's Fork and Jocko.

Mr. Kelly now makes his home at Springfield, Oregon, looking after the interest of his real estate, and improving the town by an addition. In this

delightful village, in the midst of wealth and prosperity created largely by his own exertions, he spends the calm hours of a life of great activity and many high endeavors. He has eight children living: Mary L., wife of Hon. H. B. Miller; Thesara M., wife of S. Jackson; John H.; Sarah M., wife of Judge A. H. Tanner; Abraham S.; Geo. H.; Elizabeth P. and Katy L. One child is deceased.