

THE PIONEERS.

I feel like doffing my hat to the pioneers whenever and wherever I see them. To them we are indebted in a large measure for the happy families and prosperous States that now bless this country of ours. It was their self-sacrificing efforts and their patience and labor that made the wilderness blossom like the rose. To their courage and daring spirit is due the building of proud and prosperous States where once the buffalo roamed and the Indian ruled and held high carnival. We of this generation cannot show too much reverence and respect to the pioneers who did so much for our Christian civilization under so many and trying hardships. My own ancestors, earliest settlers of East Tennessee, are entitled to our admiration and love. Their experiences were most thrilling. They were endangered by Indians and wild beasts from without and disease from within. We cannot now realize that they plowed their fields with sentinels on guard. Amidst the loneliness of the forest and the solitude of the plain they struggled on and on, and no soldiers of fortune