



"Hail ye heroes, heaven born band!"

HEROINES THAT EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

TALES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE
WORLD'S HEROINES OF ALL AGE'S

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INTRODUCTION

THE Book of Heroes should never be separated from the Book of Heroines; they are the two parts of that story of courage, service and achievement which is the most interesting and inspiring chapter in the history of human kind in this wonderful world of ours. Whenever

and wherever there has appeared a hero, a heroine has almost always worked with or for him; for heroic and noble deeds are rarely done without some kind of cooperation.

Now and then, it is true, single acts of daring stand out alone; but, as a rule, the hero gains his end because other men or women stand beside him in times of great peril. William the Silent could not have made his heroic defence of the Low Countries against the armies of Spain if men of heroic temper and women of indomitable courage had not been about him in those terrible years; Washington could not have converted a body of farmers into an organized and disciplined army if he had not been aided by the skill of drill masters like Steuben; nor could Lieutenant Peary make brilliant dashes for the North Pole if other men did not join him in his perilous expeditions. The hero is generally a leader of heroes, as a great general is a leader of soldiers who carry out his plans in hourly jeopardy of limb and life.

It is a mistake to think of heroes as rare and exceptional men; the world is full of those who take their lives in

their hands every day and think nothing about it; or, if they think of it at all, think of it, as Mr. Kipling would say, as part of the day's work. It is almost impossible to open a daily newspaper without coming upon some story of daring by some obscure man or woman. The record of a fire department is usually a continuous register

of the brave deeds done by those who receive very small pay for a very dangerous service to their fellows. It is not necessary to go back to the days of chivalry or to open the histories of great wars to find a hero; he lives in every street, works in every profession and never thinks that he is doing anything unusual or impressive.

There are many stories of heroic deeds and men, but these are as nothing compared with the unwritten stories of brave and chivalrous people whose lives are full of courage, self-denial and sacrifice, but of whom no public reports are ever made.

It has taken three centuries to explore and settle this country, and there are still parts of it in which those who live face the perils and hardships of pioneers. Ever since the war of the Revolution the skirmish line of civilisation has moved steadily forward from the Atlantic to the Pacific; and every man who has carried a rifle or an axe, who has defended his home against Indians or cut down trees, made a clearing, built a rude house and turned the prairie or the land taken from the forest into a farm, has had something of the hero in him. He has often been selfish, harsh and unjust; but he has been daring, full of endurance and with a capacity for heroic work; But he has never been alone; we see him always as he faces his foes or bears the strain of his work: we often forget that there was as much courage in the log house as on the firing line at the edge of the

forest, and that the work indoors was harder in many ways than the work out of doors and far less varied and inspiring. If we could get at the facts we should find that there have been more heroines than heroes in the long warfare of the race against foes within and without, and that the courage of women has had far less to stimulate

it in dramatic or picturesque conditions or crises. It is much easier to make a perilous charge in full daylight, with flying banners and the music of bugles ringing

across the field, than to hold a lonely post, in solitude at midnight, against a stealthy and unseen enemy.

Boys do not need to be taught to admire the bold rush on the enemies' position, the brilliant and audacious passage through the narrow channel under the guns of masked batteries, the lonely march into Central Africa, the dash to the North Pole; they do need to be taught the heroism of those who give the hero his sword and then go home to wait for his return; who leave the stockade unarmed and, under a fire of poisoned arrows, run to the springs for water for a thirsting garrison; who quietly stay at their posts and as quietly die without the inspiration of dramatic achievement or of the heart-felt

applause of spectators; who bear heavy burdens without a chance to drop or change them; who are heroically patient under blighting disappointments and are loyal to those who are disloyal to them; who bear terrible wrongs in silence, and conceal the cowardice of those they love and cover their retreat with a smiling courage which is the very soul of the pathos of unavailing heroism and undeserved failure.

From the days of Esther, Judith and Antigone to those of Florence Nightingale, women have shown every kind of courage that men have shown, faced every kind