CHAPTER X

A TOUR OF THE NORTH

In times of stress people must have heroes. Robert Anderson, of Fort Sumter fame, became the rallying cry to raise up soldiers for the first battle, but his reputation tarnished as the feeling developed that he had given up the fort too easily. Oliver Ellsworth marched his comical Zouaves up hills and down and made himself known to many people; and then when he took to serious war and sought to cut down the Confederate flag on the Marshall House in Alexandria, Virginia, he was himself shot down by the hotelkeeper and thereby was made for his country into another hero, though a dead one. Charles Wilkes humbled Great Britain when he stopped the Trent and took off Mason and Slidell, the Confederate agents, and awoke to find that his name led all the rest in a country that needed another hero and a live one. But soon the people were to see that Wilkes had done nothing more than what the British themselves had been doing for centuries, and there straightway developed a vacancy in heroes.

It was, therefore, an opportune time for Brownlow to make his appearance, and ride upon a reputation made in a fashion quite different from any one so far used. He was, indeed, not entirely unknown in the North, for he had gone to most of the Whig national conventions and he had carried on his memorable slavery debate with Parson Pryne in Philadelphia a few years before. But the North had never known the hero that was now in the making; heretofore, he had been an intense partisan of the Southern people and Southern slavery; now through a miraculous transformation he would devastate those people with as

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1 This chapter was published in substantially its present form in The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, VII (1935), 3-27. For permission to reprint it here, I wish to thank the Managing Editor of that journal.
terrible destruction as he had formerly dealt out to his worst enemies in the North. He was now to sweep across the Northern sky, and in every lineament and characteristic become familiar throughout the land.

This is what Northerners saw and admired: He was six feet tall, but somewhat short of the 175 pounds which he had at one time weighed; he was almost fifty-seven years old, “and, although rather hard-favored than otherwise,” he would “pass for a man of forty years.” He was high-strung and taut, vibrating with restless energy. Though no orator he spoke in a loud voice, and revelled in making speeches bristling with pointed darts of venom and vituperation. Three years previously he had suffered an attack of bronchitis which had left him for two years unable to speak above a whisper, though he had gone at various times to the best doctors in New York for treatment. Yet he had known the time when he “could be heard by an audience of any size”—when, indeed, he had “been able for four or five dreadful hours on a stretch to speak in the open air.” This voice which had seemed to be so stubborn that it could not be coaxed back through temperance talks or even sermons was upon the Parson’s new introduction to the North, to the Stars and Stripes, and to freedom, to reappear as he told of his wrongs and as he poured out hot hatred and vengeance upon the South. The farther he penetrated the North and the more terribly he condemned the traitors, the stronger his voice got, until it could be heard again for a half mile. This was the physical Parson.2

The mental and moral Parson followed these specifications: He had a pugnacious and decisive nature, which led him to take part in all the religious and political controversies of his time. As he told his awe-stricken readers and listeners, “For the last thirty-five years of my somewhat eventful life I have been accustomed to speak in public upon all the subjects afloat in the land, for I have never been neutral on any subject that ever came up in that time.”3 Though known “throughout the length and breadth of the land as the ‘Fighting Parson,’ ” he maintained

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2 Temple, op. cit., pp. 281-84; Portrait and Biography, p. 26; Suffering of Union Men, p. 9; Parson Brownlow’s Book, p. 18.
3 Ibid.; Suffering of Union Men, p. 8.
that there was no one more peaceably inclined toward his neigh-
bors than himself. He further introduced himself as an extra-
ordinary person. He had never been arraigned in his Church
for immorality; he never played a card; he was never a profane
swearer; he “never drank a dram of liquor, until within a few
years,—when it was taken as a medicine”; he never smoked a
cigar or chewed a quid of tobacco; he never attended a theatre;
he never saw a horse-race except at the fairgrounds of his own
county; and he never courted but one woman and her he mar-
rried.4

At twelve o’clock noon, on March 15, 1862, the Parson with
a flag of truce up alighted from his buggy in the Union lines,
five miles out from Nashville, and once again breathed the pure
air of the United States. On his trip he had been somewhat
wrinkled and drawn in his countenance, but on seeing the Fed-
eral lines, he swelled up, his wrinkles disappeared and he shouted
out, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good
will toward all men, except a few hell-born and hell-bound rebels
in Knoxville.”5 He announced that he was “Parson Brownlow”
and then began shaking the hands of the soldiers who crowded
around him. Soon officers made their appearance, and the Parson
was conducted to General Buell, who greeted him with great
cordiality and sent him to the St. Cloud Hotel. The General
did not neglect to find out all the Parson knew about the Con-
federate armies and fortifications through which he had recently
passed. On reaching the hotel the Parson’s identity was dis-
covered by a group of soldiers who crowded in upon him to
gaze at this fighter from East Tennessee and to listen to the
conversation which he had struck up with some acquaintances
in the lobby. Horace Maynard, Emerson Etheridge, and other
expatriated East Tennesseans soon learned that the Parson
was in town and hurrying to the lobby they enacted amidst
gaping straggling soldiers scenes of tears and pathos.

Brownlow was undoubtedly one of the greatest attractions
that had come to Nashville since the arrival of the Federal army.
And here fate was to play some of its strangest pranks. Andrew

Johnson and Parson Brownlow may not have travelled a great distance geographically to meet in Nashville but they had travelled an infinite distance mentally. They both arrived about the same time, the one Brigadier-General Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee, the other plain William G. Brownlow, the Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands. It seemed the Parson was about to become a greater attraction than the Governor; the two certainly must meet. Brownlow had fought Johnson "systematically, perseveringly and untiringly, for the last twenty-five years. . . . He has scored me on every stump in the state of Tennessee, and I have paid him back to the best of my ability." And then the two former enemies met, "rushed into each other's arms, and wept like children." They sank the hatchet in a briny effusion and parted fast friends. Though not ecstatic in his praise of the new Governor, Brownlow felt sure that the choice would please Union men generally. It pleased the Parson particularly to know that Johnson felt "all the malice and venom requisite for the times."

Brownlow remained in Nashville a week during which time he continued to be a great attraction. There was much Union speechmaking going on in this center of sullen secessionists. The Parson heard Etheridge speak to 1,200 people for two hours; he would soon hear Maynard speak for two and a half hours; he would certainly make a speech himself, for the crowds around the St. Cloud Hotel would demand it. His time soon came. He spoke out in the biting March wind in front of the hotel, but he had not been away from the "bogus Confederacy" sufficiently long to regain his voice completely. He spoke only a few minutes but he had strength enough to tell the crowd that he had been thrown into jail in Knoxville, that he had served his time, and that on seeing the Federal troops he "felt like a new man." Declaring that the Confederacy was tottering; he ended his speech with the cry, "Grape for the Rebel masses, and hemp for their leaders!" Henry Villard heard him and thought that he "was a very entertaining talker, and spoke more movingly, with
flashing eyes and pointing finger, of the wrongs to himself and
his fellow-Tennesseeans.97

The Parson found the ladies in Nashville more rebellious and
bitterly unyielding than any other class of citizens, but they
were not all so, for a Union lady presented him with a bouquet.
There were also other Union ladies in and about Nashville, for
he attended a tea given by some of them, and with others he
planted himself on Spruce Street to help them wave handker
chiefs as the Union army marched by. And this little patriotic
party did not stand unnoticed by the troops. Each regiment
halted, played a patriotic air, and cheered for "Parson Brown
low and the ladies."8

When Brownlow reached Nashville he could not forget that
here had been the capital of Southern Methodism, and that the
Baptists had made it one of their strongholds. He could not
help but think that the worst class of men in the South were
preachers, and as for Summers, McFerrin, and McTyeir he
learned that they had fled, leaving their Book Concern vacant.
But God be praised for good old Bishop Soule, now eighty years
old! A Federal chaplain who had recently visited him at his home
near Nashville, had found him reading—the Constitution of
the United States. But the "notorious J. R. Graves, the Baptist
editor," had fled ingloriously before the oncoming Federal
troops.9

The Parson had left Knoxville with few if any plans for
the future except to speed the day when the Federal troops
would rescue his East Tennessee. There quickly passed through
the minds of certain people great possibilities. The country was
in bad need of a hero who would make Northerners hate their
erstwhile Southern brothers so intensely that they would be
willing to shoulder arms and slay them if they could. It was
soon evident that the Parson had no equal in beating the war
tom-toms and firing the minds of the people. This was so both
because of the story he had to tell and because of his manner

7 Memoirs of Henry Villard, Journalist and Financier, 1835-1900, 1, 234; Portr
trait and Biography, pp. 17-18.
9 Ibid., pp. 392-94.
of telling it. Soon, therefore, came in a stream of invitations from Northern cities whose citizens were not sufficiently interested in the war, begging the Parson to come and make a speech. He should be well paid for his trouble. Even Lincoln urged him to visit Washington. Here was the Parson's chance; he would make a triumphal procession through the North, inciting Northerners against Southerners, gratifying his own very natural desire to be lionized for what he had done and suffered in East Tennessee, and at the same time accumulate enough money to make it possible to return home, when it should be rescued, and begin where he had left off with his *Whig* newspaper.

He set out for the North down the Cumberland, on the *Jacob Strader*, "that floating palace," and on March 23 he arrived at Fort Donelson, "where the late terrible battle was fought." He saw arms and legs of dead soldiers, protruding from their shallow graves, and the stench was so offensive that he stayed as far away as possible. The boat hooked up here for the night, but there was no rest for the Parson, for his reputation had already got too far ahead of him. Troops from the Northwest, passing up the river, heard that he was on the boat. They immediately surrounded the craft and insistently demanded a speech. Forced out on deck, he made them a short talk in which he riddled the Confederacy and tried to madden his hearers by declaring that that government was torturing women and children. The Confederates were fleeing southward, and he predicted a great battle would be fought if the Federals could catch up with them.\(^{10}\)

Resuming his journey down the Cumberland into the Ohio, he continued up this river and arrived in Cincinnati on March 28. He was met at the wharf by representatives of the Gibson House who offered him their hospitalities as long as he should remain in the city. The Union Committee immediately called upon him and escorted him to the Merchants' Exchange where he made a short address before "a vast assemblage of the best men in the Queen City." He was then taken sightseeing to view the wonders of the "most populous city of the West." For the

next few days the city revolved around the Parson, biding the time when he should deliver his principal address. In the meantime he was making himself handy, praying at a funeral at one time and becoming the center of animated conversation at another.\footnote{\textit{Cincinnati Daily Commercial}, March 29, April 1, 1862; \textit{Parson Brownlow's Book}, pp. 399-400; \textit{Irreligious Character of the Rebellion}, p. 33.}

On April 4, the Parson addressed an immense audience in Pike's Opera House. Every seat was filled and the crowd overflowed into the aisles. According to the \textit{Cincinnati Gazette} the opera house had likely never before accommodated such a large and refined assemblage. The house was decorated with flags. Across the front part of the stage were two tiers of seats for the honorary vice presidents and toward the rear was a raised platform on which were seated 372 school children, who sang a special song of welcome ending with the lines:

\begin{quote}
"Thus speaks he, the hero! Then sing with one voice:
We love and revere him, in his presence rejoice!
Then hail him again, and forever and aye!
His country he loves, and for it he would die!"
\end{quote}

Thereupon the Parson was introduced as the model patriot whom the historians would pick out from all the other heroes for his matchless courage and patriotism. Then for an hour and twenty minutes Brownlow held up before his audience his ancestry, his politics, both recent and remote, his experiences in East Tennessee, and the heart-rending jail scenes. He did not fail to mention his bronchitis and the fact that his voice was getting stronger the more he denounced the vile heresies of secession. He was a Southerner and his opinions did not change with the section of the country in which he might find himself. He still believed in slavery but he was for the Union first, even \textit{though every institution in the country perish.} The South was more to be blamed for the war than was the North. But he would say:

If I had been authorized, some two or three years ago, to select about two or three hundred of your most abominable anti-Slavery
agitators in the North, and an equal number of our God-forsaken
and most hell-deserving Disunionists at the South, and had marched
them to the District of Columbia, hanged them on a common gal-
lows, dug for them a common grave, and embalmed their bodies
with Jimson-weed and dog-fennel, there would have been none of
this trouble, nor should I have been here to-night!

He would have the property of all rebels, including their
Negroes, confiscated and used to recompense the losses of
the Unionists. He declared that the rebellion had pretty well
“played out” and predicted that the Federal troops would
“wind the thing up this spring and summer.” The blockade had
already almost starved out the South, and he closed his speech
on this key, concluding, “It has been remarked on the streets
of Knoxville that no such thing as a fine-toothed comb was to
be had, and all the little Secession heads were full of squatter
sovereigns hunting for their rights in the territories.”

Short addresses were then made by General S. F. Cary, a
native Cincinnatian and a widely travelled temperance lecturer,
and by John F. Fisk, the President of the Kentucky Senate.
Then came a lengthy set of resolutions declaring that the Union
must be preserved and maintaining that Brownlow was a true
and intrepid patriot. The meeting ended with the song, “Hail
Columbia.” As the admission fee had been fifty cents, the Parson
was doubly grateful for his large crowd, for he was enriched
in the amount of $1,125. He gratefully accepted this sum with
a reference to the plight in which his wife and children found
themselves.

Preachers preyed much on Brownlow’s mind. He addressed
a meeting of the ministers of Cincinnati and seized the occasion
to condemn again the Southern clerics. He declared that “High
functionaries in the Episcopal Church are now drinking and
swearing.” In the South many of the ministers preached on
Sunday, “but swear and get drunk during the week.” He spoke
of a recent meeting in Knoxville where a minister had prayed

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12 Cincinnati Daily Commercial, April 5, 1862; Portrait and Biography, pp.
22-26; Parson Brownlow’s Book, pp. 401-25.
13 Cincinnati Daily Commercial, April 7, 1862.
that the Lord would sink Burnside’s fleet and raise Lincoln’s blockade. “And at it they went,” continued Brownlow, “composed of many old clerical rips, who besieged a throne of grace, raising their hands heaving and setting like an old Tennessee ram at a gate-post, that God would send lightning and storm and raise the blockade.” Instead, the Lord gave Roanoke Island to Burnside. There was just one thing the Parson would put before the Union—the Christian religion. 14

Brownlow set out northward in tow of General Cary, who received his title through his position in the recruiting service. 15 The General considered the Parson his best means for raising Federal armies. The modus operandi consisted of the Parson’s set speech, which he had first tried out on Cincinnati, and then while the heat was white the General would strike a blow for the recruiting service. They stopped first at Dayton, where they addressed a large audience, and on April 8 they arrived in Indianapolis. On the trip they had been accompanied by the mayor of Indianapolis and they received “one continued ovation during the journey.” On their arrival at the Indiana capital they became the guests of Governor Morton. The Parson spoke in Metropolitan Hall to a crowd equal to any that had ever gathered there. The Governor and Mayor Maxwell and many other eminent people sat upon the stage as the Parson delivered his set speech. When he concluded, “Glory Hallelujah” was sung. Then the Governor announced “a brilliant victory” which the Federal troops had won. This news greatly excited the audience and the “patriotic Parson joined with the assemblage, and waved his handkerchief exultingly.” 16 It was the opinion of competent judges that this meeting was “the most intellectual and spirit-stirring entertainment Indianapolis has ever had.” 17 Governor Morton knew the Parson well enough to realize how much he would enjoy going out to Camp Morton to see 5,000 Rebel prisoners, some of whom no doubt were the very soldiers

14 Portrait and Biography, pp. 30-45.
15 Cary was later elected to Congress in 1866. Ten years later he was nominated vice president on the Greenback ticket.
16 Portrait and Biography, pp. 49-64.
17 Ibid., p. 64.
who had pestered him back in Knoxville. He could not resist making them a speech, now that he had them where they could not run away. He spoke to them after a manner which got for him "no very cordial reception." In fact, some of them cried, "Traitor to the South," "Put him out."\(^{18}\)

The Parson and the General left Indianapolis and passed through a continuous ovation en route to Chicago. They had decided to go because the Chicagoans had adopted such complimentary resolutions that the Parson felt that he could do nothing less than visit them. The Board of Aldermen appointed a committee to which were added representatives from the Commercial Exchange, to go out to welcome him as he neared the metropolis. They awaited him at Michigan City where Federal Judge Drummond honored him with a complimentary speech. The party now passed into Chicago and deposited the Parson on the bountiful hospitality of the Sherman House. As soon as possible after his arrival he went out to Camp Douglas to take a triumphant look at the Rebel prisoners there—again 5,000 of them. He made them a short speech, but he seems to have pursued tactics different from those he employed at Camp Morton, for they made no harsh remarks or menacing motions at him.

He and General Cary made their first formal speeches before the Merchants' Exchange. Mayor Ramsey introduced the Parson to "the immense throng" and a member of the Board of Trade sang his praises, declaring that when the history of the rebellion should be written, "it will be sadly deficient if its pages do not tell, in words that burn, the story of your wrongs, your fortitude, and your unswerving devotion to your country in the hour of her great trial. Our children will need no romance to stir their young hearts; but the truthful picture of your sufferings and heroism will fill the place of high-wrought fiction." No longer, he declared, would it be necessary to turn to the Greeks and Romans for mighty heroes. On the following night Brownlow and Cary made their customary speeches to "an overwhelming audience."\(^{19}\)

\(^{18}\) Ibid., pp. 48-49; Parson Brownlow's Book, p. 426.

\(^{19}\) Portrait and Biography, pp. 65-72; Parson Brownlow's Book, p. 429.
The Parson now doubled back on his trail to Cincinnati, passing through Lafayette, Indiana, where he addressed a "large and enthusiastic audience." Ohio at this time had a hero in the person of Clement L. Vallandigham whom the Union element desired strongly to replace. Recruiting had shockingly slowed up under his teachings. A loud cry, therefore, went up for the Parson and the General. The legislature, seconded by both branches of the Columbus City Council, called upon Brownlow to visit the capital city to perform his act. He arrived on April 14, and was met at the station by the 69th Regiment with their brass band. They escorted him to the capitol amidst cheering throngs. The speaking took place in the afternoon in the House Chamber, crowded with Senators, Representatives, and "a great number of ladies." Governor Tod and the Parson, arm-in-arm, marched to the platform where the Governor introduced the Parson to the audience and turned him over to James Monroe, the President of the Senate. President Monroe spoke lengthily on the noble traits the war had brought out in many people, and held up the Parson as one of the best examples. Thereupon Brownlow spoke his piece "which stirs and fascinates by its tones of earnestness." In the evening, introduced by ex-Governor Dennison he spoke for more than an hour. As it was very difficult to make politicians into soldiers, the General waited until the meeting in the theatre to spread his recruiting net. Before leaving for the East, the Parson was entertained by the president of the City Council, at a magnificent banquet attended by many senators and representatives and also by "many handsome ladies."20

Brownlow was now about to pass out of a region somewhat disaffected with the war because many people here were of Southern ancestry, because it made little money out of the war, and because it felt the depression and horror of men killing men in wholesale fashion. He no doubt left with the feeling that he had whipped up against the South fury sufficient to drive whole armies into General Cary's recruiting nets. He would soon enter a region which was not sending recruits up fast enough because

too many of its people were too busy making money out of a national calamity. They did not think much about the horrors of war because they had no time left for such diversions amidst the enjoyment of those things which their newly-got fortunes would buy for them. Soon the American correspondent of the London Times was sending back dispatches on this order: "There is something saddening, indeed revolting, in the high glee, real or affected, with which the people here look upon what ought to be, at any rate, a grievous national calamity."\(^{21}\)

On April 17, he reached the forks of the Ohio, where he was met by the combined governmental forces of Pittsburgh and Alleghany City. They gave him the keys to both cities and conducted him to the best hotel, the Monongahela House. In the evening he spoke for an hour and a half to "a crowded hall," and left early the next morning for Philadelphia. He was invited to ride on the locomotive in order that he might while crossing the mountains better enjoy the beautiful scenery. The romantic beauty of it all gripped him, suggesting his own Southern Highlands, and thus he expressed his emotions:

Poets and tourists may sing and write of "a life on the ocean wave," or "a home on the rolling deep"; but give me a seat in an open locomotive at the head of a long passenger-train, and let me cross the Alleghany Mountains from Pittsburg to the new mountain-city of Altoona, gazing on the dashing streams on the one hand, and the lofty and romantic mountains on the other. The sun was high in the hill of heaven, and rolling his chariot through a cloudless sky; all creation was calm, and sleeping on the bosom of serenity, until aroused by the heavy tread and clear whistle of the iron horse!\(^{22}\)

At Altoona the Parson was met by a group of outriders from Philadelphia including, "that prince of clever fellows, George W. Childs, the extensive and energetic Philadelphia publisher." After a ride across more mountains they arrived at Harrisburg, the "ancient capital of the Keystone State." An "immense concourse" gathered around the train and demanded a speech from

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\(^{a}\) Quoted in E. D. Fite, Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War, p. 259.

\(^{b}\) Parson Brownlow's Book, pp. 436-37.
the Parson. Introduced by Governor Curtin and invigorated by his mountain scenery, he made a fiery pass at the Confederacy. He would not speak of his troubles "in the kingdom of Jeff Davis," but he would say that the Apostle Paul had fought only with the "beast at Ephesus," while he, himself, had "fought the 'devil and Tom Walker,' and the infuriated legions of the so-called Southern Confederacy!" His greatest ambition was to go back to set up his *Knoxville Whig* again. "I want to go back," he declared, "and point out to the triumphant Federal army such men as deserve to hang, and suitable limbs upon which to hang them! Nay, I desire to tie the rope around some of their infernal necks." The rebels had hung, shot, tied to trees, and whipped to death East Tennesseans, but a change was coming. After speaking a few minutes the Parson excused himself to go into the "Refreshment Saloon" to join in a cup of coffee the Governor, ex-Governor Porter, and other celebrated people.\(^23\)

Then he was off for Philadelphia, "being immensely cheered at every station on the railroad, and loudly called for." Though it was about midnight when he arrived, he was met by an official delegation from the city government and welcomed with a short speech. After making his bow in a few remarks he was driven rapidly to the Continental Hotel—"perhaps the most elegant house in America." After being introduced to a number of people who could not wait until the morning to meet him, he was shown to his rooms, tired though happy. A few years had produced a wonderous change in the Parson's relation to Philadelphia. The city was now to accord him a reception much different from that which had taken place when he was debating Parson Pryne. It was only natural that this patriot of '61 should be early driven to Independence Hall, the cradle of the liberties he had been so valiantly defending, and that when there he should think of Washington, and Franklin, and Robert Morris, and of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. A reception was held in the Hall where he was properly welcomed by the city. At eleven, he appeared on a flag draped stand erected in front of the Hall, where he spoke to an "immense audience." He made

his set speech with few changes. Varying his "squatter-sovereign" thrust somewhat, he said, "They were out of soap with which to wash their dirty faces; they were out of every thing, including fine tooth combs, while every little rebel head was full of squatter-sovereigns, looking for 'their rights' among the tangles." Forgetting their dignified Quaker heritage the audience roared with "tremendous applause and laughter." After he had finished, his admirers were given a chance to meet him. So great was the rush that he retired to the interior where groups were admitted and received behind locked-doors. One timorous lady who asked about her son in East Tennessee fainted when the Parson told her that he was a Rebel. 24

On reaching Philadelphia Brownlow could consider that he had completed one of his major campaigns. But it seemed there could be no rest in the North for a person of his characteristics. He was being called for in every direction. The report was spread that he had been offered $1,000 a night to "go on the lecture platform," but that he had refused because that would give him more money than he needed. 25 It was also reported that Lincoln invited him to come to the White House. 26 Before he had reached Philadelphia, the city of Baltimore invited him to make his speech there. 27 All these offers he refused, for the sound reason that George W. Childs had not gone all the way to Altoona for no good purpose beyond being the first to welcome the Parson to Philadelphia. Being a successful publisher, he naturally knew that Brownlow could write the kind of a book that people would buy. The contract was made and the Parson retired to the little village of Crosswicks, New Jersey, to do the work, and a book resulted whose significance will later appear.

Crosswicks was a quiet sleepy little country village, which until the Parson's arrival had never experienced greater excitement than to have as a neighbor four miles away in Bordentown, first "the celebrated infidel Tom Paine" and later for a quarter

26 Ibid.
27 Parson Brownlow's Book, pp. 442-44.
of a century Joseph Bonaparte, the ex-king of Spain and brother of the great Napoleon. But with the arrival of Brownlow this little Quaker settlement awaked from its long sleep. Three Quakers soon asked him to speak in their meeting house, a favor never before bestowed upon outsiders. He regaled a "crowded house" with an hour and a half of fervent speaking. In fact the Parson was so much himself on this occasion that, on his own admission, he gave the building such a shock as it had never felt since the days of the Revolution when a cannonball had plowed a hole through the north wall. 28

While Brownlow was busily whipping his book together, his family was making its way out of the Confederacy, under a special escort. As before stated, the policy of the Confederacy in East Tennessee required this expulsion, but the Parson hastened the departure by his unwise and untrue remarks in Cincinnati and elsewhere that his family was being held as hostages for his good conduct. With much effect he informed his Northern audiences that he had told his wife on his departure that she might well prepare to be executed, for he was going to assail terrifically the Confederacy, in the North. 29 He was now in such a heroic mood that it appeared he was willing to sacrifice his wife on the altar of his patriotism.

With his family now safe at Crosswicks, he launched an attack against Colonel W. M. Churchwell, Confederate provost-marshal in East Tennessee, who had ordered the expulsion, declaring that the provost-marshal was taking his spite out on helpless women and children because the Parson had once exposed him in a case of personal dishonesty. And General E. Kirby Smith, for allowing himself to become the tool of Churchwell, was "little," "sordid," "mean," and "contemptible." There was only one person connected with the expulsion who had gentlemanly instincts, Lieutenant Joseph H. Speed of Virginia. The Parson attributed Speed's good manners to his background of Whiggery and Methodism. Brownlow was especially excited by a report published in a Confederate newspaper that his family

28 Ibid., pp. 444-46.
29 Cincinnati Daily Commercial, April 1, 1862.
were good Confederates. With great force he denied the slander, and explained that the "only difference between us is, that I claim to be capable of despising the wicked concern, and all connected with originating it, with more intense hatred than they can."30

Less than a month after arriving in Philadelphia, Brownlow was ready to resume his campaign. He was being called for in all directions. New York, the largest city in all the land, was anxiously waiting to welcome him; and certainly Washington, the seat of those who held the destiny of the Union in their keeping, had claims upon the Parson which amounted to an obligation on his part to visit that city. But he was as near Washington as he expected to approach, as long as he could well keep away. He was considerably disgusted with Lincoln and the government for their delay in rescuing East Tennessee, and he was not afraid to speak out his sentiments. In early May he exclaimed, "In God's name, I call upon President Lincoln, and upon his Cabinet and army-officers, to say how long they will suffer a loyal people, true to the Union and to the Government of their fathers, to suffer in this way." With growing impatience he declared, "Let the Government, if it have any regard for its obligations, redeem that country at once, and liberate these people, no matter at what cost of blood and treasure. They have suffered these outrages for the last twelve months, and are now desponding,—nay, despairing of any relief."31 With such thoughts he set out for New York City.

He knew there would be further adulation for him in that direction; there would also be many dollars to be gathered which he would promise to use in restoring his newspaper in Knoxville; and he might build up so much indignation against the Government's neglect of East Tennessee that Lincoln would be forced to the rescue. So he set out for South Amboy, taking with him his heroic daughter, Susan, who was now Mrs. Sawyer. Her exploits in defending the flag in the Parson's yard back in Knoxville, had appealed to the Northern mind and had sug-

30 Parson Brownlow's Book, pp. 252-53.
31 Ibid., pp. 453-54.
gested that the daughter would be almost as great an attraction as the father. The New York newspapers were now proclaiming her as a "chip off the old block." The city had already formed its opinions of the great Southern Unionist—a man original in his way of thinking, eccentric in his manner, invincible in his determination, and never giving up an opinion he thought right; a crusader who had fought with his hands, pen, and tongue—"a name which, though coupled with roughness of exterior, lack of polish and absence of refinement, has not yet been associated with dishonor, or tainted with secession." The editor of the *New York Times* sang forth:

We have learned here to regard him as the true type of what the Southerner ought to be, and of what in tale and tradition he is represented to be. Daring, self-reliant, earnest, truthful, gentle, in the right cause eloquent, and against the wrong unsparing; patient and unconquerable in persecution and adversity; the soul of honor, with the heart of a woman—these are the elements of genuine chivalry, and all these are the possession of Brownlow.

New York City awoke early on the morning of May 13, for the Parson was coming. A reception committee of distinguished citizens boarded the ferry boat at 5:30 for South Amboy to meet the train bringing the Parson and his party. For four hours they waited and listened before the belated train, decked in flags, pulled into the station, and then "Shout after shout went up from the expectant crowd, and various amusing mistakes were made by people who took and mistook everyone but the right person for the Parson." When he stepped down from the train, everyone was disappointed. "They expected to see a rough, hardy, keen-featured man, who might pass for a prize-fighter, a bully or a rowdy; instead of which they saw a man slightly built, with stooping shoulders, a round, bullet head, a quiet, pleasant countenance, and an air somewhat depressed, with a travel-stained tout ensemble very unlike the ideal."

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32 *New York Times*, May 14, 1862.
Though disappointed in his appearance, the people were none the less enthusiastic in their welcome. After being ferried across the bay, he landed amidst a throng of people who lined the street and cheered him as he was driven to the Astor House where he was assigned to superb apartments. Masses of people swarmed into the hotel to meet him, but he now felt important enough and sufficiently used-up to deny most of them the privilege. What a difference a war had made in the Parson’s standing with old Father Knickerbocker! A few years before, he had visited the city unnoticed, to seek treatment for his bronchitis; now he was peddling patriotism—and the difference was mighty.

He was soon performing in his best fashion. The day after his arrival he gave his stock speech before the Chamber of Commerce after a glowing introduction of fulsome praise. He also spoke at a banquet given by the New England Soldiers’ Relief Association. New York was a large city even in the 1860’s; the Parson must make many speeches before all who wanted to hear him could be accommodated; and there were various causes to be served. The people must be entertained by an eccentric and unusual performer; the cause of the Union must be served by the Parson whipping up patriotism through singing his hymn of hate; and he must raise enough money to reestablish himself and his newspaper in East Tennessee, if the tardy Government should ever clear out the Rebels. It was this last purpose that would be served in a speech which it was announced he would deliver in the Academy of Music on the fifteenth. A grand reception was to be held for him, and Governor Morgan was to preside at the speechmaking. The price of admission was to be fifty cents the person, and all the proceeds should go to the reestablishment of his Whig. A vast crowd attended with New York’s best in the forefront. Governor Morgan finding it impossible to attend, Hon. William M. Evarts supplied the vacancy and introduced Brownlow. Again did the Parson recount the suffering of the Union men in East Tennessee, and boldly did he tell what he thought should be done. “If nothing else will satisfy the crazy people of the South,” he exclaimed, “I believe in exterminating them, and in supplying their places with men who
would be of some benefit to the country.” The way in which the Government had neglected East Tennessee was a crying shame, and those in charge should be called to account for it. He declared, “I avoided Washington, because I didn’t want to see anybody there until justice had been done East Tennessee.”

This speech not only enriched his fortune by more than $2,500, but it also enhanced his reputation with additional praise. According to the *New York Times* this speech greatly stimulated the patriotism of his hearers. “He is himself a legion,” it said, “and might safely be pitted against the whole Confederacy.” Mr. Greeley’s *Tribune* sang out:

Seldom has more triumphant welcome been vouchsafed to warrior or statesman than was given last evening by the city *en masse*, or at least as much of it as could be compressed within the walls of the Academy of Music, to the sturdy and much suffering lover of the Union—Parson Brownlow. Long before the hour of commencement the aisles and lobbies were crowded and the stage was covered with leading citizens.

He was loath to leave New York City, for he had developed into a hero of vast proportions, so great that he eclipsed President Lincoln’s flickering reputation and could make slighting remarks about him. His plan to reestablish his newspaper received wide acclaim and support. At this time it became one of the best methods of making a patriotic display to go about getting subscribers for the Parson’s new paper; and the task was not difficult among those who had seen and heard the editor. If the paper was to be like the Parson it would be entertaining enough. A dry goods house early reported that it had secured 200 subscribers. Such loyalty to his cause the Parson felt deserved nothing less than a visit from him, so he sought them out and brought the business to a standstill as the people crowded around him. He soon mounted a table and made a “few remarks to the curious hundreds who thronged around and wished to hear him.” He told his “squatter sovereign” joke and

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36 May 16, 1862; *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 21, 1862.
“brought down the house.” Naturally more names went on the subscription list, and the *New York Tribune* hoped “a list a mile long may be obtained to aid him.”

Brooklyn was near enough to New York City for its residents to cross East River for one of the Parson’s performances, but the city would not be satisfied without a visit from the Parson. On May 17 he spoke before the Brooklyn Mercantile Library Association. An immense audience was present, with Mayor Kalbfleisch presiding. The proceeds, which amounted to $1,200, went to Brownlow’s newspaper venture. Naturally the churches would lay claim on some of the Parson’s time and strength. He promised to preach at the Hedding Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City. At the appointed time he appeared and announced that he was too weak to preach. Nevertheless, he told much about his hard lot in East Tennessee, metamorphosing an abbreviation of his set patriotic speech into a sermon. General Cary, who had been little in evidence in New York, filled out the time with a speech on temperance.

Before leaving New York City, the Parson made one speech somewhat different in substance though not in performance and effect, from the set speech which he had used so often. On May 19, he spoke before the Young Men’s Christian Association at the Cooper Institute. He named his performance the “Irreligious Character of the Rebellion,” and in it he reached an intensity in feeling and an extravagance in language which he had heretofore not been able to attain. In unmeasured terms, to his heart’s content, he poured out his bitter condemnation of the South and its leaders, lay and religious. No doubt his performance suggested in his mind the prophets of old as they smote mightily for Jehovah. He thundered out, “All the iniquities that ever prevailed anywhere on the face of God’s green earth they have in full blossom in every state south of Mason and Dixon’s Line.” Again were the Southern preachers the beloved object of his attacks. Every preacher in the South supporting the Confederacy was a drunkard—“a more unmiti-

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38 May 15, 16, 1862.
39 Ibid., May 17, 19, 1862.
gated, God-forsaken set of scoundrels do not live than the preachers of the Gospel down South." As an example of a Southern prayer and a recommendation of the proper response, he described an incident which he held had happened in East Tennessee. A Methodist preacher kneeled down and prayed, "O Lord, we thank Thee for having inaugurated this Revolution. . . . Judge Pickens rose up in his seat, and taking his hat, says he, 'God d—m such a prayer to hell!'" The audience greeted this sally with loud laughter. The *New York Times* complimented him in an editorial which it entitled "A Martyr Missionary," and declared that he was "doing good service to the Union cause by his speeches in the Northern States."

To an Englishman in America at this time, the Parson did not appear in such a favorable light. He wondered about the intelligence, culture, and mental balance of a people who could make a hero out of a person like Brownlow. George Augustus Sala introduced this subject in his diary, by writing, "Parson Brownlow you may have already heard of." He then recorded that his "gabble was not only listened to, but loudly cheered by a large and respectable audience in the Empire City of the Republic." He had not been able to determine whether Brownlow was "more bad than mad, or whether his eloquence was inspired by depravity, by delirium tremens, or by the dog days." He then quoted this as a specimen of the Parson's style:

> If I had the power, sir, I would arm and uniform in Federal habiliments every wolf, and panther, and tiger, and catamount, and bear, in the mountains of America; every crocodile in the swamps of Florida and South Carolina; every negro in the Southern Confederacy; and every devil in Hell and Pandemonium. . . . This war, I say to you, must be pursued with a *vim* and a vengeance, until the rebellion is put down, if it exterminates from God's green earth every man, woman, and child south of Mason and Dixon's Line. . . . And we will crowd the rebels and crowd and crowd them, till I trust in God we will rush them into the Gulf of Mexico, and drive the entire race, as the devil did the hogs into the Sea of

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40 *Irreligious Character of the Rebellion*, pp. 29, 32; *New York Tribune*, May 20, 1862.
41 May 22, 1862.
The Parson may not have greatly appealed to Englishmen detached from the dementia of a contest of wholesale slaughter, but he was a vast sensation to those Americans who had become so maddened by blood that they were willing to see a civilization fall and life itself disappear from the land rather than give up a political organization. So, loud and persistent calls for the Parson continued to come—from all parts of the Empire State and from New England. There was money in it, and the Parson wanted very badly to reestablish his Knoxville Whig. Before the end of May he had completely capitulated to the New England demands; he set out on a sweeping campaign which carried him into every New England state with the exception of isolated Vermont. The first city he honored with his presence was the foremost city. The people were prepared for his coming by peans of praise sung out for him. The “reputation of the ‘Parson’ had long preceded him, and there are but few who have not heard of and desired to know him.”

On May 22 the Parson arrived in Boston. The reception committee immediately drove him to the Revere House and quartered him in the historic “Daniel Webster Rooms.” Governor Andrew and his staff called upon him and escorted him out to Fort Warren, where the Parson had the pleasure of looking over some Rebel prisoners. One of the prisoners caught the ear of the Parson and convinced him that he was an East Tennessean who had been forced into the Confederate army. Brownlow inter-

42 George Augustus Sala, My Diary in America in the Midst of War, II, 403-4.
44 Editorial in Boston Morning Journal, May 23, 1862.
ceded and got his release. He held his first performance on the second day after his arrival, and made his old set speech, at Music Hall, announcing beforehand that the proceeds of the meeting would go to the resurrection of his Whig.\textsuperscript{45} Boston, being a large city, required more than one speech and more than one day's visit. He was in demand at the churches. At one religious exercise, he “made a short and characteristic exhortation, and offered a pungent prayer,” according to a news item.\textsuperscript{46} He could not refrain from visiting the business district. The next day he drew the headlines, “Parson Brownlow among the Pearl Street Shoe Dealers,” with the news that he had visited a big shoe store where “hundreds of persons rushed in to catch a glimpse of the Doctor.” Thereupon he leaped upon the counter and delivered his East Tennessee atrocities speech.\textsuperscript{47}

Leaving Boston, his plans carried him down to North Bridge-water, and thence northward to Salem and on to Lowell where he spoke on May 29 and thence to Portland, Maine, the next day.\textsuperscript{48} On his return through Dover, New Hampshire, the crowd gathered around his train and demanded a speech. He gave them a synopsis of his main speech, vigorously adding that he was “good for eight more campaigns and three more rebellions.”\textsuperscript{49} He swept on through Roxbury, Providence, in Rhode Island, over into Connecticut where he spoke at Norwich and then at Hartford. He was highly entertained in Hartford, the ammunition center. Here following his speech the workmen from Colt’s factory presented him with a revolver, holsters, and all other needed equipment. In a fiery speech he accepted this armament, and so emboldened did it make him that he threatened to put a bullet through anyone who should dare to insult the flag. He then raised the hue and cry for a manhunt to seek out the Hartford secessionists and ride them out of town on a rail. So effective was this grandiloquent gesture that he scarcely ever forgot to use it in the other towns he visited. It was a happy and be-

\begin{footnotes}
\item[45]\textit{Boston Evening Transcript}, May 24, 1862.
\item[46]\textit{Ibid.}, May 26, 1862.
\item[47]\textit{Ibid.}, May 28, 1862.
\item[48]\textit{Boston Morning Journal}, May 24, 1862.
\item[49]\textit{Ibid.}, June 2, 1862.
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fitting thought that led the workmen to present a revolver also to the daughter who had so boldly defended the flag against ninety Rebels back in Knoxville.50

He turned northward from Hartford to the arsenal city of Springfield, Massachusetts, and thence on to Amherst and Worcester. At Worcester he spoke to an immense crowd, and according to the local newspaper “He kicks, smites, chops, butchers, and crushes them, and then delivers them over to be roasted by hell-fire.”51 Truly, as a Bostonian concluded, he was “one of the most remarkable men of the time,” a statement that the Englishman would agree to but not with the same meaning.52

Philadelphia liked Brownlow, and Brownlow liked Philadelphia. The Parson had scarcely got well started in the New England states before the Quaker City was calling for him again. The war-makers of the City of Brotherly Love wanted him to speak on secession at the Academy of Music. The price of admission would be fifty cents, and the entire proceeds should be “appropriated toward the reestablishment of the Knoxville Whig.”53 The urgent invitation was broadcast: “Let our citizens turn out by thousands to show the brave preacher how highly they estimate his services.”54 On June 14, he spoke much according to his old custom with the same old story of Southern atrocities. “No larger or more fashionable audience ever assembled in the Academy of Music,” according to competent opinion. Brownlow’s family was present and occupied a box. His flag-defending daughter Susan was made the center of an interesting ceremony preceding the Parson’s speech. Not to be outdone by Hartford, which had presented her with a Colt’s revolver, Philadelphia would now present her with a fine silk flag, which she might yet be forced to defend with her Colt’s revolver.55

50 Boston Evening Transcript, June 9, 1862.
51 Worcester Daily Spy, June 10, 1862.
52 Boston Evening Transcript, May 26, 1862; The Parson’s itinerary is given in the Boston Morning Journal, May 28, 1862.
54 Ibid., June 11; W. G. Brownlow, Brownlow, the Patriot and the Martyr showing his Faith and Works, as Reported by Himself, p. 105.
Philadelphia could never tire of hearing about atrocities in East Tennessee. On June 20, the Parson was bracketed with a Mr. Bokum in a great war festival, where the former would speak his accustomed English and the latter would inform those people who understood only German. The sanitary fairs and relief meetings worked the Parson constantly but he helped them much, and the Philadelphians felt duly grateful. The war women who conducted these relief agencies, according to the *Daily Evening Bulletin* "have recently possessed a lion of the first magnitude in the brave Parson Brownlow, who is besieged with invitations every day, and presented with bouquets and huge cakes every evening. The noble Tennessean generally says a few words in his vigorous style on such occasions, and retires after a process of hand-shaking, which is no mean test of his power of endurance."56

Soon the Parson left his beloved Philadelphia, taking his family with him, and settled down in Cincinnati for a time.57 But before the end of June he was called to Washington as a witness in the impeachment trial of Judge West H. Humphreys, and only such business could induce him to go to the nation's capital, so thoroughly did he disapprove of the Government's neglect of East Tennessee. He had already made up his mind to dislike the pettifogging politicians controlling affairs there, and he was not sure that he would look with much favor on the city itself. A day or two after his arrival he expressed himself as unfavorably impressed by the Government, not only because it did not clear the Rebels out of East Tennessee, but also because it treated them too leniently. There were Rebels even yet in office in Washington. The Government treated the Rebel sick and wounded in its possession with too much care. He would confiscate all their property and besides he would stretch the necks of lots of them. As for the head man, Lincoln, the Parson had never seen him. He had called around at the White House, but the President was "holding a 'council of war,' " and so the Parson was not allowed to see him. Brownlow confessed that this

57 *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, June 25, 1862.
was “a matter of small moment,” and added “The Mountain having gone to Mahomet, Mahomet must come to the Mountain next time.” Undoubtedly the Parson felt piqued at the way Lincoln was neglecting him. He had been received with much greater acclaim in the North than Lincoln had ever been accorded—so why should he not have some little pride in the matter.

He did consent to speak his piece on the Rebellion and to tell the Washingtonians a thing or two. On the last day of June he performed in Ford’s Atheneum, but little notice was taken of his presence in town.

With an impatient disposition on the conquest of East Tennessee and with a feeling that he was a great man in all the towns and hamlets in the North, manifestly Brownlow would spend as little time as possible in cold and unappreciative Washington. So, during the summer and fall he carried out various speaking trips which took him through Central and Western New York, through Utica and Buffalo, and on into the Middle West again. He wrote his friend and publisher, George W. Childs, a letter from Utica in August, saying that he showed the Rebels “no quarter, and the people shout amen.” By October he had carried his campaign into Illinois. David Davis heard him speak at Bloomington and wrote about it as follows: “Have just heard Parson Brownlow’s speech. He spoke in East door Court House. Wind was so high that he could not speak longer than an hour and a half. He finishes tonight in the hall and is to be followed by Deacon Bross of the Tribune. His speech was the most denunciatory of any I ever heard. His talk is all random shots, no argument at all. Adjectives he used in abundance and the whole vocabulary of expletives he has at command. There was at least 2,000 persons present and went away disappointed that he quit. He tells many anecdotes but never

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58 MS letter to the New York Weekly, written in Washington, June 28, 1862. The manuscript is in the Library of Congress.
59 The only reference to Brownlow made in the Daily National Intelligencer was the brief announcement that he would speak, June 30, 1862.
60 MS letter, Brownlow to Childs, Utica, New York, August 7, 1862, in the Library of Congress.
smiles. His nostrils are like a race horse. His face is iron and you can see by his eye that he does not fear the face of man."

Brownlow had undoubtedly become a radical and he had arrived at that position through his contact with the people of the North and through his inherent disposition to go to extremes. He shot venom and spleen and fire and brimstone at the Southerners, he told how they should be hanged, drawn, and quartered. He was a fighter; he was unusual to look at; his language was decisive, vitriolic, and unpolished; in the excitement of a speech he lost all sense of proportions and largely the limits of good taste. But these things made a good show and afforded rare entertainment for the commonality of the North. The Parson mistook their applause as meaning complete agreement with his policy of extermination for the Southerners. The mass of people are never really blood-thirsty except at a distance or under the influence of mob psychology.

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61 MS letter, David Davis to Wm. M. Orme, Bloomington, Ill., October 21, 1862, in Library of the University of Illinois.