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ENERAL Nelson A. Miles is writing his memoirs. I visited him last week at Governor's Island, and found him surrounded by manuscript and documents. Photographs of famous Indian chiefs, of Alaska and of the un-

known west were scattered over his library table, and the general was sitting with a number of typewritten chapters before him, giving them the last revision before going to the printers. He has been writing at the book for months, working at it early and late, and he has it now almost completed. It will contain about 200,000 words, and it will be profusely illustrated by Frederick Remington and other well-known American artists. It will comprise about 600 pages, and will contain forty chapters. Its title will be "From New England to the Golden Gate," and in it will be found perhaps the most remarkable series of adventures ever given to the American public. I have not read the manuscript, but the plain facts of Gen. Miles' career read like a novel. His whole life has been a sensational romance, many sentences of which throb with danger, and his memoirs ought to be one of the most absorbingly interesting books of the kind ever penned. Where will you find a life like it? The greatest generals of the past have risen to their prominence through special training. Napoleon was intended and educated for a soldier; Caesar, brought up in the family of his uncle Marius, the greatest general of his time, was suckled on military milk. Grant had received his West Point education, and at forty had risen no higher than to a captaincy, and Sherman, that other great West Pointer, at this age was hardly known to fame. These men were pushed, as it were, into the army. Gen. Miles had to force his way there. He began his life as a farmer's boy. His West Point was a crockery store in Boston. One of his rich uncles offered to make him financially independent if he would give up his ambition to be a soldier, and it was only by taking all the money he had saved and all he could borrow that he was able, at the age of

twenty-one, to raise the company which enabled him to go to the army as a first lieutenant. This was at the beginning of the civil war, and from that as a starting point in the short space of four years his wonderful military genius elevated him with lightning rapidity from one position to another until, at twenty-five, he had become a major general, and had risen to the highest lineal rank in the army.

Think what the ordinary boy is between twenty-one and twenty-five, and you get some idea of the remarkable career of this ex-crockery clerk. What a story he can tell of the Army of the Potomac! He was in every one of its battles except that of Gettysburg, where he could not be on account of the desperate wounds which he had received at Chancellorsville, and which the surgeons had said would cost him his life. He was always in the thickest of the fight, and all of the generals from Grant to Burnside recommended him many times for promotion. He was wounded again and again, and he ceased his fighting only when his hurts were so great that he was unable to keep his place upon his horse. At one time when shot through the neck he put his hand over the wound and was anxious to again lead his troops into battle. Still, he never wantonly risked the lives of his men, and his coolness in scenes where other men lose their heads, and his ability to take advantage of every chance in position on the part of the enemy, made the other officers consider this boy general a valuable ally.

And then think of the Indian stories he can tell! The book will be full of them. When the war was over, Gen. Miles remained in the service and continued to seek duty in the midst of the fray. His life from 1865 until now has been one round of successes based on bravery and military skill. He has made himself noted as the most famous of the world's Indian fighters. He is the only regular officer who has conducted a systematic Indian campaign, and he has managed eight, every one of them successful. No other commander in our history has ever forced so large a band of Indians to surrender in battle as he. None have been in so many Indian engagements and none have won in fights more desperately contested. Some of his Indian campaigns have been filled with adventures which would make books in themselves. They have been in all extremes of climate. His first and last were in lands so hot that his men, crazed with thirst, opened the veins of their arms in order that they might moisten their lips with their own blood. Others were amid the arctic snowstorms of a northern winter, where the men were so clad in furs that they could not

be told one from another. He put down the gigantic Messiah conspiracy which promised to involve all the Indian tribes and make an Indian war greater than any we have yet had. Then, leaving this border warfare, he came to Chicago during the Debs strike, and with the iron hand of military rule he grasped that body of rioters and told them that the laws of the United States must be obeyed.

General Miles is a broad-guage man, and his book will abound in valuable observations. It will tell the story of the conquest of the great west, and of the building up of the empire beyond the Mississippi. He is perhaps the best authority on the Indian question now living, and a part of the book will treat of matters regarding the Indians. The chief danger as to its great interest may come, I believe, from Gen. Miles' modesty. He is so simple in his make-up that he does not seem to realize that his life has been more than commonplace, and in his private talks about the things of which he has been so great a part he puts himself in the background. During my chat with him about his book I asked him many questions as to his life, and I had to ask again and again to get at his real part in the actions he described. My talk with him was more of a social chat than a fixed interview, but it contained so much of interest that I will give some parts of it just as they occurred.

As I was looking over the contents of the book at one time during the evening, reviewing as it were, Gen. Miles' career, I thought how wonderfully he was fitted by nature for the work he has done, and the question as to how he got into his proper groove in the machinery of the universe came to me and I asked:

"General, where did you first get your desire for a military life?"

"I don't know that," replied General Miles. "I wanted to be a soldier from my boyhood. I can remember the desire as far back as at ten years of age, and at seventeen, when I was clerking in Boston, I joined a military school and drilled there for several years. This was just preceding the war. The Kansas-Nebraska struggle was on, and the air was filled with the rumors and threats of the coming fight. I remember I used to go to the library and read the southern papers, and I could see, I thought, that war was soon to come. I remained in this military school, and when it did come I was to a certain extent ready for it."

"How did you happen to get into the army? You organized a company, did you not?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I raised a company. I took all the money I had saved and borrowed more for the pur-