

# KENTUCKIANS

**K**ENTUCKY is far from being a unified region. Though known as the Bluegrass State, it divides into three sections which differ as sharply in geography, culture, economic activity, and social habit as if they were widely separated areas. These are the Bluegrass, the Eastern Mountains, and Western Kentucky. Each is populated by people who have adjusted themselves to their environment, and who in the process have developed habits and attitudes differing markedly from those of their fellows in the other divisions. Literature concerning Kentucky often fails clearly to identify the section which forms its locale, and readers unacquainted with local conditions are apt to mistake a single section for the State as a whole.

Except for Louisville, Kentucky has no large industrial centers. Most of its 2,900,000 people dwell in small rural communities. Like other agrarian folk they bear the mark of their association with the soil. The rural Kentuckian, whether clad in faded overalls or imported woollens, is an individualist. The rustic lolling at the street corners of towns and villages may give every evidence of being lost or out of place; but try to get the better of him in a trade and often he will prove master of the situation. He may be ragged, dirty, and ignorant, but he is still endowed with something of the unawed self-reliance and resourceful wit of the pioneer.

Wherever a Kentuckian may be, he is more than willing to boast of the beauties and virtues of his native State. He believes without reservation that Kentucky is the garden spot of the world, and is ready to dispute with anyone who questions the claim. In his enthusiasm for his State he compares with the Methodist preacher whom Timothy Flint heard tell a congregation that "Heaven is a Kentucky of a place." After describing the material and cultural well-being of the State, the Kentuckian is likely to begin on its brilliant history. But, unless he is engaged in historical research, the native son's history of Kentucky does not chiefly refer to the part played by the State in the westward expansion of the Nation, to the frontier democracy established by pioneer