

THE LANDLORD'S MISTAKE

When John Adams was president and Thomas Jefferson was vice president of the United States, there was not a railroad in all the world.

People did not travel very much. There were no broad, smooth highways as there are now. The roads were crooked and muddy and rough.

If a man was obliged to go from one city to another, he often rode on horseback. Instead of a trunk for his clothing, he carried a pair of saddlebags. Instead of sitting at his ease in a parlor car, he went jolting along through mud and mire, exposed to wind and weather.

One day some men were sitting by the door of a hotel in Baltimore. As they looked down the street they saw a horseman coming. He was riding very slowly, and both he and his horse

were covered with mud.

"There comes old Farmer Mossback," said one of the men, laughing. "He's just in from the backwoods."

"He seems to have had a hard time of it," said another; "I wonder where he'll put up for the night."

"Oh, any kind of a place will suit him," answered the landlord. "He's one of those country fellows who can sleep in the hay and eat with the horses."

The traveler was soon at the door. He was dressed plainly, and, with his reddish-brown hair and mud-splattered face, looked like a hardworking countryman just in from the backwoods.

"Have you a room here for me?" he asked the landlord.

Now the landlord prided himself upon keeping a first-class hotel,

and he feared that his guests would not like the rough-looking traveler. So he answered: "No, sir. Every room is full. The only place I could put you would be in the barn."

"Well, then," answered the stranger, "I will see what they can do for me at the Planters' Tavern, round the corner;" and he rode away.

About an hour later, a well-dressed gentleman came into the hotel and said, "I wish to see Mr. Jefferson."

"Mr. Jefferson!" said the landlord.

"Yes, sir. Thomas Jefferson, the vice president of the United States."

"He isn't here."

"Oh, but he must be. I met him as he rode into town, and he said

that he intended to stop at this hotel. He has been here about an hour."

"No, he hasn't. The only man that has been here for lodging today was an old clodhopper who was so spattered with mud that you couldn't see the color of his coat. I sent him round to the Planters'."

"Did he have reddish-brown hair, and did he ride a gray horse?"

"Yes, and he was quite tall."

"That was Mr. Jefferson," said the gentleman.

"Mr. Jefferson!" cried the landlord. "Was that the vice president? Here, Dick! build a fire in the best room. Put everything in tiptop order, Sally. What a dunce I was to turn Mr. Jefferson away! He shall have all the rooms in the house, and the ladies' parlor, too, I'll go right round to the Planters' and fetch him back."

So he went to the other hotel, where he found the vice president sitting with some friends in the parlor.

"Mr. Jefferson," he said, "I have come to ask your pardon. You were so covered with mud that I thought you were some old farmer. If you'll come back to my house, you shall have the best room in it--yes, all the rooms if you wish. Won't you come?"

"No," answered Mr. Jefferson. "A farmer is as good as any other man; and where there's no room for a farmer, there can be no room for me."