

**T**HE "JAYHAWK" IS A MYTH. It has no historical use. It is neither beast, fish nor fowl. The myth had its rise in the characters of two birds that frequent the Missouri Valley, namely the blue jay, a noisy, quarrelsome, robber that takes delight in pouncing upon smaller birds and robbing their nests of eggs and young birds, and the sparrow hawk, a genteel killer of birds, rats, mice and rabbits, and when necessary a courageous and cautious fighter. Just when, where and by whom the names of the two birds were joined in "Jayhawk" and applied to human beings, no one knows. However it is known that the term "jayhawk" originated in the home territory of these birds somewhere between Texas and Nebraska. It is known that it was applied to an overland company of gold-seekers on their way through Nebraska to California. It was applied to Jennison's band of free-booters, to Montgomery's rangers, to Missouri guerrilla bands of border ruffians, and finally in a general way to the free-soilers of Kansas.

In the early days of uncertainty of government, life and property, whenever bands were organized requiring purpose, courage, boldness and reckless daring, they were always candidates for the name either through choice or through the derision and hatred of enemies. It is significant also that "jayhawking" became a general term to express marauding or plundering.