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J. M. McCaleb

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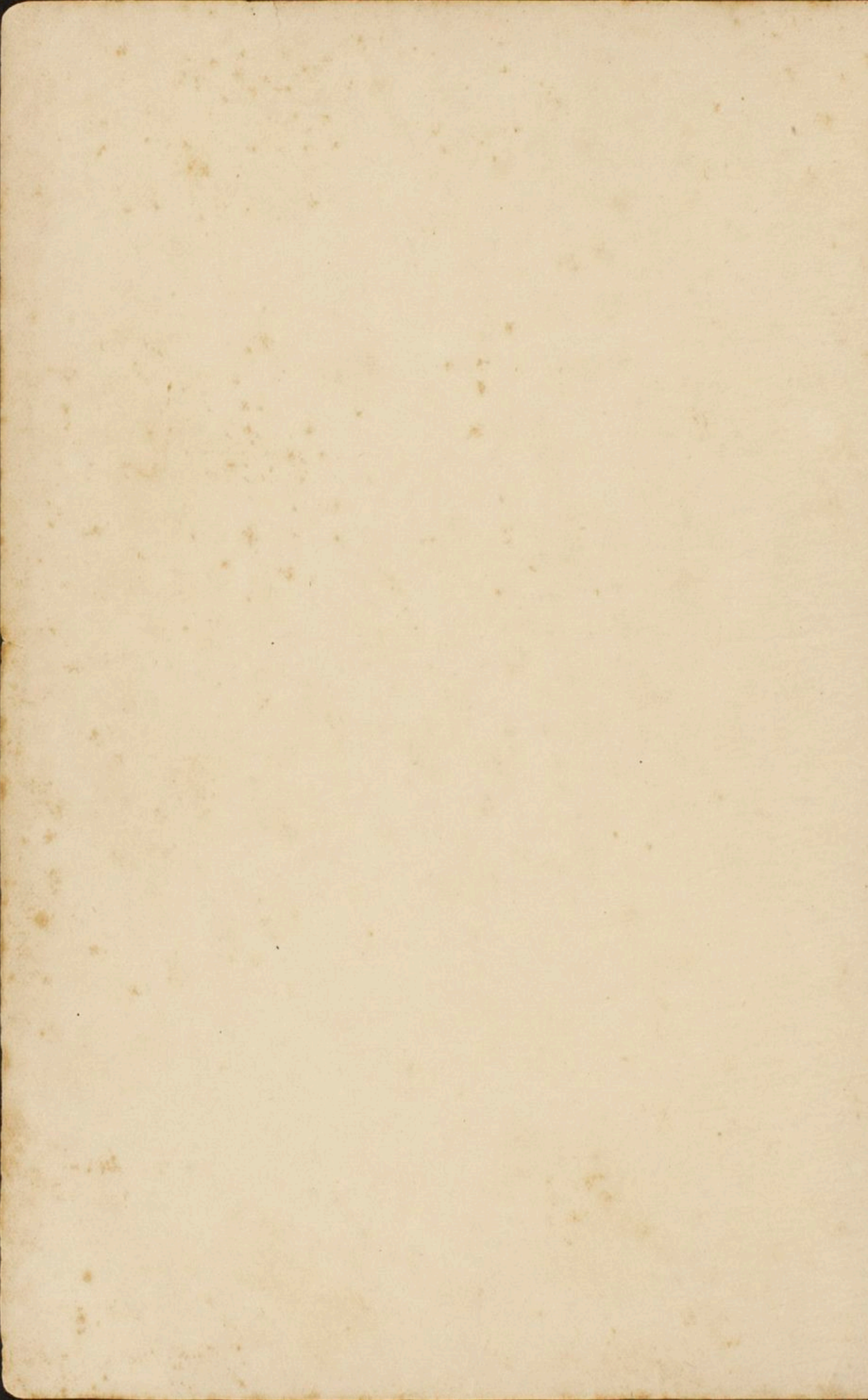
MEMORIES OF EARLY DAYS

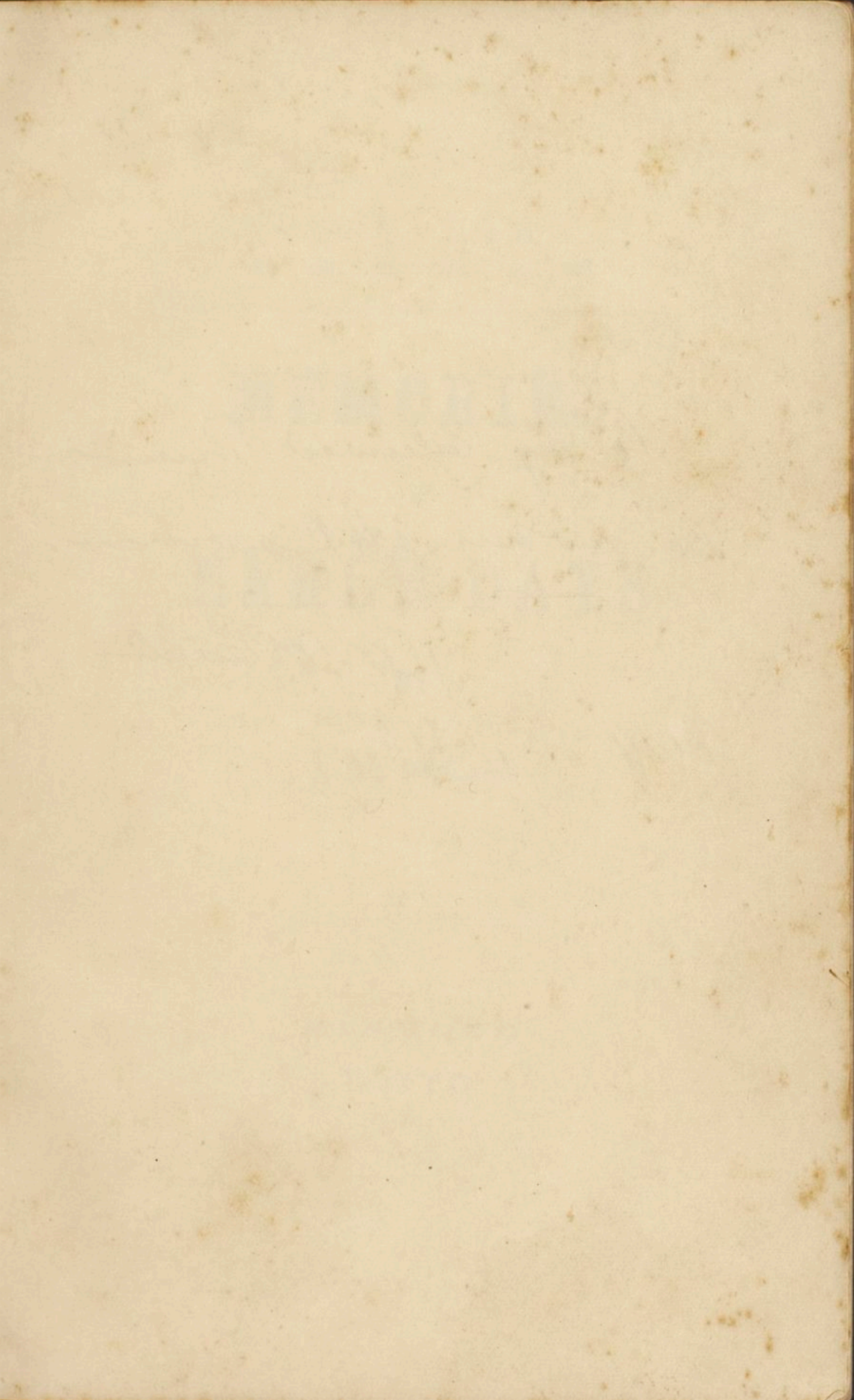
by

J. M. McCaleb.

KINKODO

TOKYO





To My Esteemed Friends,
Mr. and Mrs. J H Bowman.

J M McCaleb

May 13, 1919,

大正六年一月十八日
文　部　省　検　定　濟

MEMORIES

OF

EARLY DAYS

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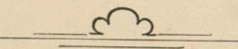

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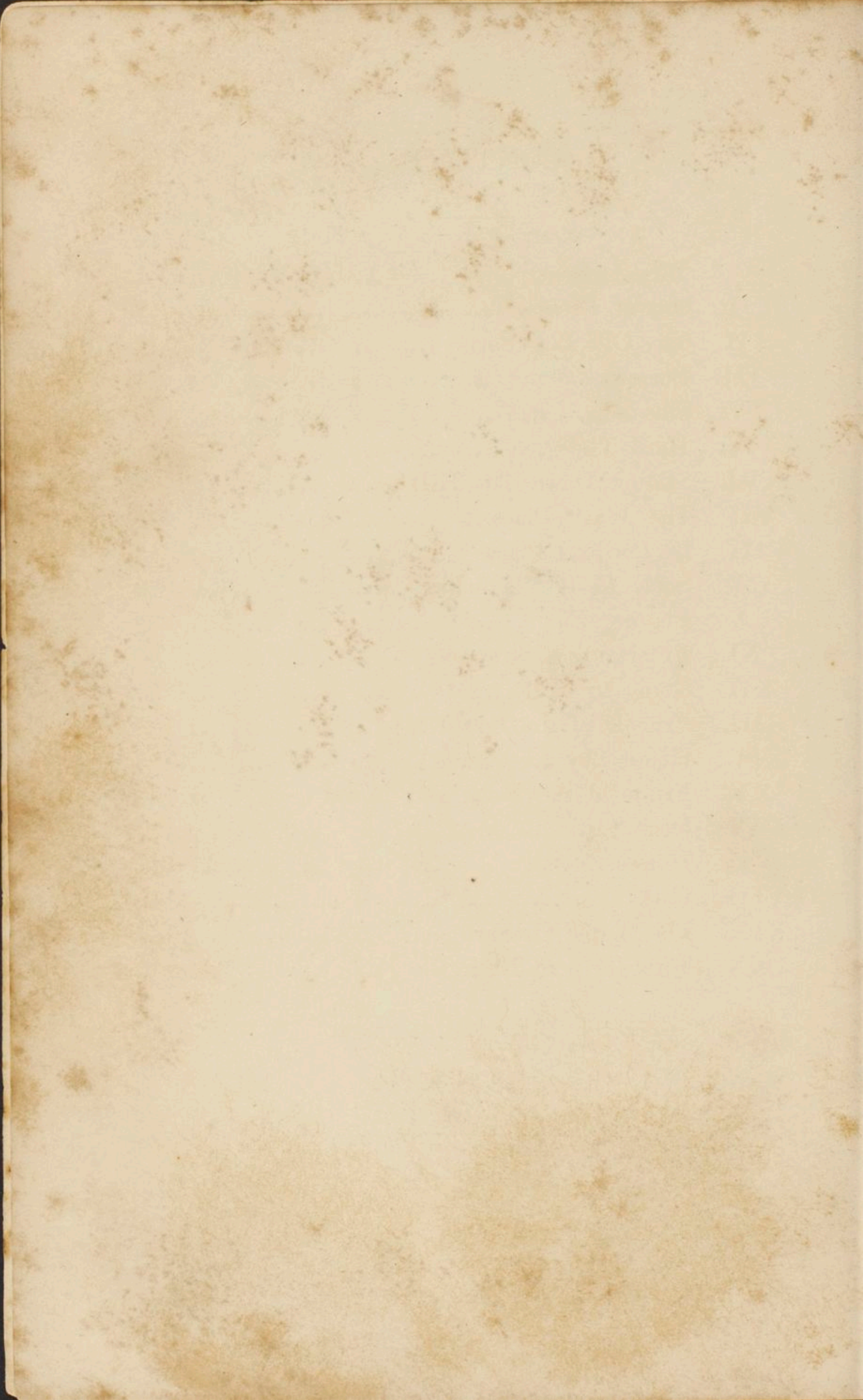

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MEMORIES OF EARLY DAYS

INTRODUCTION

Among the hills of Hickman County in Middle Tennessee, situated on an eminence of about thirty acres, in the junction of two small streams, there is a modest old farm house. The front, which faces the north, has of late years, changed some in appearance by having the old [1] piazza torn away and replaced by a veranda and a new room. Also the great old beech, oak, and walnut trees, and more immediately around the dwelling, the [2] paper-mulberry trees casting their friendly shade, are all gone. The plow now turns the soil where, at the foot of the hill, came out the spring from beneath the roots of a beech tree.

But though the general appearance is so changed from what it used to be, one who has known it of olden time can easily discover many marks of identity, showing it to be the same house of half a century ago. The windows, the chimney and the old staircase are still [3] intact. When compared with those of more modern times, the

---

1 Genkwa 2 Kōzu 3 Moto no mama

windows are small and rather high from the floor. The fireplace of the old brick chimney is broad and the arch high, indicating that it was meant for a large family. Before the present veranda and front room were added the old piazza, which was about ten feet deep, ran the whole length of the front, a distance of twenty feet or more. The main family room, for there was no parlor, large and [1] commodious, was the first-room entered from the piazza, while next to this, as one proceeds south, are two smaller rooms, a bed room and a dining room. The stairs wind up in the right hand corner by the fireplace, turning midway on a platform, and thus landing above at right angles to the foot. When a small boy I called it a *flat*form instead of *plat*form till some one pointed out my mistake. I changed my pronunciation because older authority said I must; but, though still submissive to authority, I have never been convinced that *plat*form is more [2] appropriate than *flat*form. But to proceed, all is boxed up save two steps that [3] protrude from beneath the door. Upstairs is one large room that answers to what is commonly called a garret, but no one in those days ever thought of giving it so dishonorable a name as that. The upstairs was never finished, as the builder was cut off before his plans

1 Benri na 2 Tekito 3 Tsukideto iru

were completed, and the shingles, rafters and other framing of the house, are all exposed to view. Immediately beneath these shingles in that upstairs room where there were usually one or two beds, was an ideal place to sleep on rainy nights when the patter of the rain was like sweet music to soothe the nerves and check the wandering mind into slumber.

Still to the south was the kitchen about ten feet away from the other building and connected with it by means of a covered passage and a broad puncheon for a walk-way. This puncheon was a great slab sawed from the side of a large poplar log. The kitchen had a loft of loose planks laid across on the joists where walnuts, dried apples and dried peaches, sausages done up in shucks or flat bags and hung to the rafters, and other important stores were kept.

To the east stood a log smoke-house, built of split logs notched down at the corners in the usual way. On the south side of the smoke-house was a shelter which served for carpenter's shop, [1] gear house, sheep pen and a general retreat for boys, ducks and chickens on rainy days.

Back of the dwelling the ground gradually rises to the top of a long hill which, owing to its [2] elongated shape, is called a "ridge." The land

1 Naya 2 Hosonagai

right and left, as well as in front of the house, gradually slopes off to the two small streams, in the immediate junction of which stood the barn, which was down across the field at an unusual distance. Beyond the streams great hills rise up on all sides, save an opening to the east through which the creek flows to the river, about a mile away. Before reaching its destination, it is crossed a short distance from the mouth by one of the main roads of the county, connecting the upper country with Centreville, the county seat. Farm houses nestled here and there among these densely wooded hills, varying in distance from each other from a few hundred yards to several miles.

Supposing ourselves to be standing on the old piazza, back more than forty years ago, and looking to the north, the neighbors within the radius of something like a mile, as we turn to the right, are as follows:—

Robin Cochran (pronounced Cawhorn), William Beasley, Robert Bates, Samuel Bates, B. B. Bates, their father; Nelson Bingham, T. Bingham, Mary Anne Deaton (a widow), William Kelley, Myatt Mobley, Wallace Mobley, Jared Cotton, Young J. Harvill, John Bryant and Prudens Pugh, also a widow. These and a few [1] tenant houses with [2] transient occupants, constituted the

1 Kosakunin no iye 2 Kari no

community half a century ago.

It was in the modest old farm house, in the midst of these surroundings that, on Wednesday, September 25th, 1861, I was born into this wonderful and beautiful world. Though there were no girls in our own home, in most of the families were both boys and girls with whom I grew up till I reached the age of twenty-one. Preceding those of my own age were the grown-ups, a set who were the companions of my older brothers, for I was the youngest of six, and about whom I have heard many a practical joke and wild tales of adventure. Some of the names of the older set were as follows:—

The two Cochran boys, five of the Bates boys, the Bingham boys, Thomas, William, and Porter Moore, Augustus and Robert Puckett, L. Duncan, Roy and Augustus Bryant, Daniel, Jack, and George Smith, Bud, and Enos Shelby, John, and David Andrews, Alexander, and Marian Harvill. Some of those more nearly my own age were, Crittenden, and Robert Beasley, Joseph Bates; James, Brown, Reece, and Willie Bingham; Polk, and Willie Bryant; Andy and B. Shelby; Samuel and Robert Savage; Fletcher, Frank, and Moody Harvill, and John Mat Puckett. These were by no means all the boys of the neighborhood but only those with whom I played with most. In all these

families also, or most all, was a proportionate number of girls without whom our community would have gone bankrupt and never could have made that healthy progress that all proper neighborhoods are supposed to make.

Lying beyond on all sides were other similar communities with their passing, present and coming generations and with whom there was more or less visiting back and forth so that each knew pretty much all that was going on in the other. The public interests that kept these neighboring communities in touch with each other were such as the mill, the church, trade and matrimonial interests that often sent the young men and, more slyly, even the young women as well, off into some other region in search of their fate or fortune. Except vague reports of far-off happenings in the greater beyond this constituted my world till I was bordering onto manhood. It is within the time and geographical limits herein suggested that these stories are laid.

1 Kekkon no

STORY ONE

OUT OF DRESSES

Long after I had outgrown them I can remember seeing the little dresses I used to wear, laid away in the drawer, for, being the last and the least there was no younger member of the family who might fall heir to them. And I also remember quite distinctly when this change was made. My mother had made me a pair of panties that buttoned on to a waist, or body, and the eventful day came when I must change from baby dresses to garments showing that I was no longer "it" but "he," no longer a baby but a little boy. But I was by no means well pleased with the change. In the first place it was something I had not been accustomed to, and, being somewhat of a conservative nature, my heart did not take so readily to the new idea. But the chief objection to the [1] innovation was not so much because of its being of a different style, but because of the buttons on the waist. They did not [2] strike my fancy in the least,

1 Henkwa 2 Kiniiru

but the very sight of them was [1] hateful to me. They were of smooth, white glass that came up to a point in the center and were quite conspicuous and shiny. Very nice little buttons they were, as I now think of them, but for some reason they were exceedingly [1] distasteful to me. Neither was this from training; it was inbred. Though in no way [2] fussy or fantastic about dress, but possibly to the eyes of some a bit neglectful as to personal appearance, yet I have always been hard to please [3]when it comes to buttons. Even now when buying a suit of clothes, one of the first things that catches my eye is the buttons. If they are not according to my liking the suit is laid aside for another. Covered buttons are more to my taste than others till they get slick or begin to peep through then they are the worst of all. If I could manage to get on without buttons altogether as the Japanese do I would like it better still.

But, not to get too far away from my story, I remember the very place where my mother tried to get me into that first pair of little trousers. It was out on the old piazza to the right as one comes out of the house. She took off my little dress, then, holding the panties up before me as she bent over from behind, tried to get me to put my foot in; but I squirmed and twisted and shook my

1 Iyana 2 Yakamashii 3 "*When it comes to*" means *about*

little rebellious elbows back and forth and stamped up and down and cried. I can hear her even now as she tried [1] to coax me into them, but without success at that time. Finally she brushed me out to play and went on about her house work till the naughty spell should wear off. I do not remember in this particular instance whether it was true or not, but, judging from the way she usually dealt with her children, no doubt she reasoned the case with me till I became reconciled. Be this as it may, not many days had passed till I went visiting with her up to Cousin Myatt's as proud of my new suit, inspite of the buttons, as most little boys are at such times.

Our mother often admonished and sometimes scolded, but rarely ever whipped. I have no remembrance of ever feeling the sting of a switch from her hand. Child ideas and sentiments may seem to older people foolish and unreasonable; but to the child they are very real and deep-seated and a wise parent will endeavor to enter into the child's thoughts and feelings and, as far as possible, consider the matter from the child's point of view. Children are born with certain traits, tastes and weaknesses; with bad tempers, dull minds, timid feelings, lazy dispositions and kindred misfortunes, for which they are no more responsible than some

1 Nadamete kiseru

are for having crossed eyes, a stub nose or a humped back. Parents and others to whom children are committed should act with discretion and take all these things into consideration and train with patience and kindness rather than scold and abuse. Parents are often found scolding their children when they ought to be teaching them.

STORY TWO

THE OLD LOG BARN

The tall old log barn stood at the junction of the two small streams already mentioned. It was about twenty-four feet square and was built of poplar logs, hewn down on each side till they were only about six inches thick. They were then notched at the ends and built up into straight, tall walls, four square, which constituted a large pen. A big spreading chinkypin (chinquapin) oak stood between the barn and the branch. The trunk was short, not being more than twelve feet high where it parted into several branches that spread out in all directions. The acorns were small and oblong in shape, being about the size of the little finger up to the first joint. They ripened in the autumn as the frosts came on, about corn-gathering time. When ripe they were bl ck and almost as sweet as chestnuts. At the falling season the hogs loved to root in the leaves for them, and even we boys liked to pick them up and [1]munch on them as we went back and forth to the field while gathering corn. Woodpeckers carried many of them away

1 Eat little by little

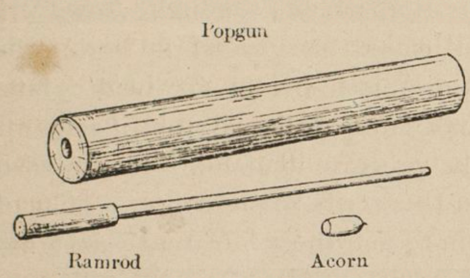
and stuck them in the cracks of dead limbs, standing fence rails, or between the rough bark of a tree, for winter use.

When green the acorns also served as excellent ammunition for our [1]popguns which were made from the large joints of the elder bush. The length of the popgun depended on the length of the space between the joints of the elder. Sometimes we were able to get one a foot long. It was necessary first to punch out the pith—we called it "peth"—which was a soft substance that filled the hole in the center. If the walls of the gun were too thin, it would not do for it would, by the pressure of the air when the acorns were thrust through, be sure to split. The ramrod was about an inch shorter than the gun so as not to push the acorn entirely through, but leave it to be shot out by air pressure when the next one was thrust in. These guns shot with tremendous force and made a report almost as loud as a rifle.

But, to return to the old barn, on the upper side of the building was a shelter which was afterwards torn away and the barn [2] shedded on three sides. The rafters consisted of long, straight chestnut poles with the bark peeled off. On these were nailed the laths, split out of oak timber and nailed across the rafters about a foot apart. The

1 Tsuki deppo 2 Sheltered or roofed

boards, also riven from oak timber, were nailed to these laths, being put on shingle fashion. The wall plates were unusually large, being about a foot thick by eighteen inches wide. They furnished an ideal place for the pigeons to roost on and also on which to rear their young, and a pair or two of squabs were usually to be seen flopping their tender, featherless wings, while they screamed after the mother for food. The pigeon's method of feeding her young is a little different from many other birds. She first swallows both the food and drink herself and then, poking her own bill well down into the open mouth of her babe by a quivering motion of the head, ejects it again into the young one's mouth. A squab once, I remember, chanced to have a cross-bill, that is, the points of the bill didn't meet. So long as the parent birds fed it this deformity caused no inconvenience; but when the time came for it to fly, then came its trouble, for then it was expected to seek and pick up its own food. As the points of its bill didn't meet, of course it could not pick up any-



thing. When it was almost starved to death our mother asked Little Berry to kill it as an act of mercy. Remarkable enough however, there is a bird called the crossbill from this peculiarity in the formation of its beak; but, the crossbill's beak is so designed that it may all the more readily procure its food. It can also bring its bill to a point when necessary. That of the pigeon was not according to Nature's designs, but was an [1] interruption of nature in some way. Possibly the parent had injured the little one's bill in feeding it and it thus became a misfit. This reminds me that we sometimes find the same unfortunate condition in children. So long as they are nourished and cared for by their parents they get on very well, but when the time comes for them to be put on their own responsibility, they seem quite helpless.

Swallows stuck their mud nests to the chestnut-pole rafters and flitted in and out at the great old window in the gable end of the barn.

Beneath the original shelter above mentioned, was a large drive wheel of a wooden thrasher, the only kind used up till that time. Then came into use the ground-hog thrasher which was a great improvement. Next was the separator, so called because it separated the wheat and the chaff

1 Samatage

as the wheat was being thrashed. The axle of this great wheel which was about ten feet across, consisted of a large beam set on end, the lower and upper ends turning in sockets, while the rim of the wheel, filled with cogs, turned round over head. A smaller cogwheel, attached to the end of a horrizontal beam, worked in the larger one and the beam to which it was attached passed into the barn and was geared to the thrasher. It was run by horse power. The horses, hitched to a lever that passed through the large upright beam, walked around under the drive wheel out side. The wheat and chaff as it came from the thrasher, passed through auger holes in the upper floor to the floor below, leaving the straw above to be packed away for [1] provender and fed to the stock.

On the lower floor was a wheat fan, or a fan-mill as it was sometimes called. It was painted red, turned by a hand crank and could be made to go round very fast. One of my earliest recollections is the memory of this red wheat fan. To me it was very wonderful and also very pretty, and some of my older brothers, perhaps to get me to hush crying, or to keep me from wanting to go fishing with them, or to get my attention off of something else for I don't remember all the circumstances now, made a lasting and pleasing

1 Dobutsu no tabemono

impression on my mind about the "little red wagon" down yonder in the barn that one could ride in and that I might have it and all that. I was too young to reason on such matters; it was at an age when the imagination is predominant and when things, whether real or fanciful are accepted just as they are presented; so there it was just as vivid in my mind as a veritable red wagon that I could ride in and have all as my own.

This stirred within my young and tender nature a very responsive feeling, for from the time I can first remember I have had a natural fondness for wagons. I loved to watch the wheels turn and make the pretty smooth tracks after them and to see if the hind wheel would follow in the track of the front one. Even to this day a pretty wagon has its attractions. And a train of cars gracefully gliding across the country is a sight irresistible and I always stop to look.

Hens would hide away their nests up in the hay and oats of the barn loft. Sometimes we would find one with a hatful of eggs in it. Sometimes we wouldn't find the nest and the hen would "set" and the first we would know of it would be when we would hear the chirping of the little chickens and the clucking of the mother hen as she walked around near by trying to coax them

out and in some way get them down to the ground. Then instead of a hatful of eggs we would find a hatful of downy, fluffy little chickens to be carried to the house and put in a coop with their mother till they were larger.

On rainy days when we couldn't get out it was great fun to climb up into the old barn loft and turn summersets on the hay. Once we got tired of turning summersets and got to throwing cobs in a sort of pitched battle. One struck me square on the side of the nose and almost disjointed it which ended my fun for that day. I do not know why, but in all such [1]fracases I usually got the worst of it.

1 Kenkwa

STORY THREE

SORROWS

Like most children brought up in the country we nearly always had some pets—a motherless chick, a duckling, a gosling, a lamb, a pig or some wild animal or bird we had captured. I do not remember for sure that we ever tried our hand on grashoppers, toads, lizzards and snakes.

Once my brother, Little Berry, and I undertook to train the goslings to drive like a pair of mules. They were about half grown and the tender feathers were coming out on their wings. We had them tied together two and two, then lines attached to drive them by. We had driven them down to the branch to water them and were coming back up the hill toward the bouse when our mother was heard calling us to dinner. This greatly excited our feelings and all the more since we could actually smell the steaming dinner already on the table. One of us took time to untie the necks of the young geese under his charge, but the other felt that the waiting dinner should be attended to without a moment's delay

and he dropped his lines with the goose team still in the harness and off we scampered up the hill to the house, intending, of course, to return as soon as dinner was over.

When we came back we found that the ones left tied together had not gone very far till they had come to a bush. One attempted to go on one side and the other on the other, while the string by which they were tied, having struck the bush, kept getting tighter and tighter round their necks, and as they did not know anything better to do, they pulled all the harder to get loose. The more one pulled the more the other pulled against him. Their necks were stretched straight out. I suppose you have heard tell of "acting the goose," well this is what they were doing. There they were when we found them in a dead-set, the one against the other choked to death. Then we were in a [1] peck of trouble, wished we hadn't done it and were sure we would know better next time.

Once we had some pet lambs that had been left motherless. Of all the pets in the world a pet lamb is the [2] cutest. They have such innocent little ways and antics that seem almost child-like. We brought our adopted children up "on a bottle" as the common saying is, by which

1 Slang, meaning much trouble 2 Mottomo kw irashii

it is meant that we taught them to suck the milk from a bottle instead of their mother. We didn't have a rubber nipple to put in the bottle's mouth. We took a goose quill cutting off both ends so the milk could pass through, then wrapped a soft rag around it till the roll was large enough to fill the bottle as a stopper or cork. The rag covered the end of the quill so as to check the milk from flowing too freely. We had been taught that a certain quantity of milk each day was sufficient. As they grew and their little baby ringlets of wool grew out into a fine coat we became very much attached to them, and they did not seem to know but what we were their real mothers. Often we would run and romp and play with them out on the green grass.

Once we were to go up to Mr. Gilmore's to keep Mrs. Gilmore company over night while Mr. Gilmore was away. Of course if a thief or a bad man with evil designs had come we would not have been of much service by way of protecting Mrs. Gilmore, but any how she felt safer and was not so lonely even if no one but some little boys was with her. We were very much afraid that our pets would get hungry before our return. Why we didn't ask some one else of the family to attend to them for us till we got back I do not remember. Maybe we were afraid they would for-

get it; maybe we felt that they didn't know so well how to feed little lambs as we did. It may be we felt sorry for the lambs because we would be away all night and tried to make up for our absence by giving them more milk. Any way, to make sure that they would not suffer hunger till we got back, we gave them a double quantity. Then off up the long hill we went back of the house and out the "old ridge" to Mr. Gilmore's.

Next morning when we reached home the first thing we thought of was the pet lambs and we hurried to [1] look them up to give them their breakfast. We found them not far from where we had left them the evening before, but they didn't need any breakfast. There they both lay stretched out stiff and strutted as tight as two little balloons. We had over done a good thing and had given them too much—killed them by kindness. Then there was another funeral, a double one this time, for on all such occasions we never allowed the remains of the dear dead to go without receiving an appropriate burial. The funeral ceremony was always simple but very impressive. We had no fixed burial grounds. At the back of the garden, out in the cornfield between the corn ridges or down the lane in the fence corner were usual places. A few broad

1 Look them up=find them

leaves laid over the corpse before the grave was filled with earth, served both as shroud and coffin.

You have heard of people taking a wild-goose chase which means to chase or pursue an object that cannot be obtained. Well, I will now tell you of one that is no tale but a real story. There had been some flocks of wild geese haunting the wheat fields during the winter and early spring, and among them was one that had become wounded in the breast, apparently by flying against a snag, or possibly from some unfriendly hunter's gun, so that when her comrades went away for other parts she was compelled to remain behind. Gradually however she was recovering so that she could fly almost as good as ever. Uncle Bazeel Bates, or as he was commonly called, "Uncle Baz," in whose wheat field she was often seen, shot her one day so that she was again disabled. She flew off up the creek past our house and lit in the long bottom field. He rode up to our gate and told us about it, and said if we would catch her we might have her. This sent a thrill of excitement all through us and set our hearts to going like a fever. Little Berry and I were off like mad, for we usually went together on all such occasions, to capture the wild goose—it was a genuine wild-

goose chase. We had no gun and would not take the dogs with us lest they might kill the goose. The most formidable weapons at our command being some light sticks we hurriedly picked up on the way. Sure 'nough we soon caught sight of her, with her long black shiny neck stretched up and her bill pointing skyward, watching our approach. But long before we were even in throwing distance she spread her wings and flew again, but lit before getting out of sight. This was repeated several times for she would not fly so very far before lighting, and we kept up the chase. Finally we noticed that she lit in a certain fence corner and hid behind a [1] chunk. This was at the upper end of a little bottom field by the creek very near where my oldest brother now lives. As we drew near we got down and crawled on our hands and knees. We had it understood between us that we would get up close to the old log, then rise and both jump at the same time making a grab where we supposed the coveted prize would be. She flopped out by the end of the log in my direction, and as good luck would have it, I caught her by the neck.

It was now getting dark and we were about a mile from home. We hastened back with the captured goose, two as proud boys as one can

1 A short rotton log

well imagine. When we reached home the rest of the family were almost as much excited as we were for none of them thought we could catch a wild goose. We gave her some corn and some straw on which to sit and turned a tub over her, leaving a good-sized crack at the bottom so she could breathe. Then we put some heavy weights on top so she could not get out or the dogs disturb her, My! our hopes were high and our plans great. She would soon be as gentle as a tame goose and would lay eggs and we would set them under a hen and raise more wild geese till we had a whole flock of them, and they would honk! honk! honk! about the place just like the wild ones that flew across high up in the sky that taunted us by being so far away we couldn't get a clear look at them ; and as they would go walking about among the tame ones their long black necks with a white stripe under the throat would look so beautiful. It was a glorious vision and we could hardly sleep that night for thinking about it.

Next morning we were up [1] bright and early, and when we peeped under the tub there was our wild goose still. The corn was untouched. She was sitting flat down with the point of her bill resting on the ground and her eyes closed She

1 Idiom

was dead! And the vision of wild-tamed geese with their honk! honk! honk! just like we had heard them as they flew over, high up in the sky, and their glossy black necks with a white stripe under the throat, vanished into thin air.

Sorrow for a dead goose was soon forgotten, but there is one feature of the story that I never think of but what I regret it and for this reason I was about not to mention it, but I believe I will. My brother who had run just as hard as I, and who had practiced just as much skill as I in the laying and carrying out of our plans, was entitled to share the glory equally with me. For it was a mere chance in my favor that the bird happened to flop into my hands; in fact, by his being a little quicker on the jump than I, he sent her my way and was the principal factor in what seemed to be my achievement. But as we were returning home he wanted to carry her and at least have the joy of going to the house with her in his arms. Yet I was selfish enough to insist on carrying the prize the whole way all by myself. If it were to do over again and I could see it as I do now I would act more nobly and reap a much sweeter joy than self-glorification.

STORY FOUR

SINS

I was tempted to pass over this part of the road wholly in silence as though I had never gone over it; but if I should, the story as a whole would fail to portray child nature in its true character. As I am telling real stories it is better to speak of my own than the sins of others, for this would seem unkind; I have therefore decided to relate in particular some of my own mistakes.

I have never known the time when I did not desire to tell the naked truth and to be strictly honest; but very many have been the times when I have failed in both. Nothing was ever locked from us, not even the sugar, and we were taught always to ask for what we wanted which we usually did. Our mother said that locking things from children only made them thieves. For the most part we respected her wishes and told her the truth. I remember however that one day I went to the "derry," which was an old-time dairy used not only for keeping milk in but also as a cupboard, on my own accord and found a very tempting left-over ham bone which had been

boiled for dinner that day, and, without asking I proceeded to help myself. I cannot now tell why I didn't ask for it. May be I persuaded myself that no one would care. I might have been afraid to ask lest it be denied me, and, having a boy's appetite, didn't want to run the risk of not getting it. It might have been that I was ashamed to let my mother know I wanted to eat again so soon after dinner, a dinner the usual size of dinners eaten by small boys. I did not mean to eat it all, but once I had begun I could not very well stop so long as any meat remained on the bone.

Not long afterwards I was questioned about the missing meat and I denied having eaten it. For such prevarication there was absolutely no excuse, for at most a little scolding would have been the extent of my punishment. I ought to have had the courage to confess my deed then the matter would have been at an end and my conscience at ease; but for that little lie it continued to goad me for a long time afterwards. Some one has well said, "A fault once denied is twice committed."

We were cleaning up, our mother and we two little boys, cleaning the upstairs. Somehow I was not in a good humor that day, and Little Berry and I were not getting on agreeably at all.

Just what put us so [1] at outs I do not remember. Maybe he was teasing me about something for he was great at running a joke, so much so that we often accused him of "running them in the ground." Or it might have been that we were put to the unpleasant task of cleaning house when we wanted to go fishing, trapping, or something of the kind. However that may be one thing I distinctly remember and that was, I was [2] out of sorts with my brother and the situation did not seem to be improving. Our mother always admonished us at such times, often telling us that some day when many, many miles apart we would be sorry we had ever quarelled. To some degree this had a softening effect on our hearts and brought about a more speedy reconciliation, but not so this time. My anger being kindled to a white heat against my brother I let fly a very ugly word at him—"dern you," I said. "Did you curse him? Did you curse him?" twice she asked with a drawn hand, while my head was bowed in silent sullen shame. A keen smack on the face was my external punishment; but the humiliation of having been so bad my mother had to spank me, the only time she ever did it so far as I can remember, and the remorse of conscience at having actually used a curse word, stung

1 At enmity 2 Angry with

me ten times more than the smack from my mother's hand. I had heard this wicked word by others, but till now had never used it myself not even so much as once, and really it was not my intention to do so at this time, for if I had meant to use it on purpose I would have waited till my mother was not present. As we commonly said when an accident happened, [1] I didn't go to do it. But the evil one had suggested it to me, the suggestion remained in my mind, sub-conscious mind it may have been, and, like a serpent out of a box, it was out before I had time to think what I was saying and really I was almost as much astonished, as if it had been a serpent. It didn't sound at all natural and I hated the very sound of the word as soon as it escaped my lips. If my mother had only known it, I was punished already and the spank was unnecessary. From that day till this I have never repeated it. Why should I? Why should I have ever used such a word even once? Did I mean it? I would have been as much grieved as anyone had it come to pass, for it was a condemnation pronounced against my brother.

The cold winter had passed and the welcome spring with the return of the martins and the dogwood blossoms, had come. The jay-birds had

1 Didn't *intend* to do it

remained with us, for, unlike some others, it was not their custom to go south in the winter and return at the approach of spring. During the cold months they manage in one way or another to find food, and at night to seek shelter in the thick tufts of dry leaves on the oak trees, or some other place of refuge. I have seen them in the large forks of the tall old black oak tree that stood near our home, nestled down in the moss with just their heads sticking up. It is the habit of the jay-bird also, (commonly called the *blue jay*) never to build her nest far out on the branches like some other birds, but close against the trunk, or frequently in a large fork where three or more limbs come out together.

We were planting corn over on the hillside just opposite the house by the spout spring. The spring broke out far up on the side of the hill and poured over the edge of a rock and the little stream that flowed down from it formed the boundary of the field on that side all the way down to the branch in the valley. Along the little stream had been left a number of trees, mostly beech, which furnished a pleasant shade under which to rest and an ideal retreat for the birds. A jay-bird had built her nest in one of the beeches on some branches close against the trunk, about twenty feet from the ground. There were

three of us engaged in planting corn that day, Merriman, Little Berry and myself. Merriman laid off the rows with a plow drawn by two horses, I dropped the corn and Little Berry covered it with the hoe. As we gradually climbed the hillside row by row we spied Mother Jay on her nest. Now I do not think it could be said of either of us that we were cruel at heart either to birds or animals; but we had been taught that jay-birds, crows and partridges, being very destructive to the crops, were great enemies to farmers. This aroused in us an ill feeling against the innocent mother bird, and as we viewed her up there on her nest so near the corn we were planting right under her very eyes, we could almost see her a few days later when the first green blades began to shoot up, driving her strong, straight bill down in the soft ground after the grain of corn at the root of the young plant. We accordingly determined on her destruction and began throwing rocks (stones) at her. Our older brother drove out to the end of the field about this time, and, taking the part of the innocent, had us stop. We went a few rounds more and while our brother was at the other end of the field, renewed our attack and succeeded in knocking the nest to the ground. It contained not eggs as we had supposed, but young birds not more than a week old.

They had not yet begun to feather, but were only slightly covered with a very fine, yellow down or fuzz. The poor little things came tumbling down and fell on the flat rocks in the bed of the little stream and feebly scrambled about feeling that something had gone wrong, they knew not what. If it had only been some broken eggs we would not have minded it, but the sight of the little helpless birds was a different matter, and it immediately changed all our feelings of antipathy to that of pity. If we could have placed them back up in the tree again with Mother Jay hovered over them with her warm sheltering wings just as they were before, we would have been only too glad to do it. But it was too late now and something had to be done to finish our task, and that [1] right away before our brother got back from the other end of the field. To put an end to their misery we mashed the heads of the little baby birds with some rocks and threw them out of sight. I do not remember whether our mistake was ever found out or not, but one thing was certain, we were both sorry and ashamed of it. We had received a punishment more effective than the rod and never had to be told not to do it again.

A field of green corn in August. A long lane that ran by the side of it. An old straw

1 Sugu

stack near the middle of the corn field around which somebody had planted some melon seed. Four or five boys one Sunday afternoon on their way back from the river where they had been in swimming, riding along the long dusty lane. "I know where there are some water-melons," said one, "Where?" asked another, "Right out in that corn field around an old straw stack." And in order to forestall any objection he added, "They don't belong to anybody, only the niggers (negroes) planted them when they were plowing. "Let's sample 'em," A few minutes later, having hitched their mules to the fence, the crowd of four or five boys were humping it out the rows of corn in quest of the water-melons that didn't "belong to anybody." They found a few small ones and hastily broke open two or three and with their fingers [1] gouged out the red meat and [2] gulped it down. "Let's be making tracks" said the leader. They [3] streaked it back through the corn to the fence, scrambled over it and on to the mules and tried to appear and feel that nothing had happened. But something had happened, though, that ought not to have happened and at least one of those boys, then fourteen years old, felt it most keenly. He had never been guilty of such a thing before and has never been guilty of such

1 Horita 2 Nomikomita 3 Kaketa

a thing since. I suppose he has wished a thousand times, that it never had happened. The plea that they didn't belong to anybody served for the moment to lead him into the temptation but it was not enough to satisfy his conscience afterw..rds. And then the feeling of being a thief! Long years afterwards when a grown man with a family living in a distant land he sent money to the owner as compensation for the damages done, and an apology.

One of our nearest neighbors lived just across the fields and the house was in sight. Often on a still clear morning we could hear the common conversation of the family as they went about the place. To accommodate the growing family, the old house was being remodeled and an L added. The carpenters were at work and blocks, shavings and remnants of lumber were scattered about in confusion. While all this was going on, two little boys were sent to this neighbor's on an errand. A negro woman was helping with the house-work. She had a little girl about five years old, a full-blooded child of Ham. Her skin was a shiny black and her hair was so kinky it was more like black wool than hair. In order to straighten it her mother had wrapped it with strings into little wisps about the size of the finger. These wisps stood out straight from the head like so many

little horns. She was playing under one of the newly-made windows with some of the blocks the carpenters had let fall, innocent and contented. The two little boys were just leaving for home. B. B. which may stand for Big Boy, appeared at the newly-made window for a last word, and, discovering the little girl below, he leaped out by her and as he did so said, "I'll slap that blamed little nigger." Suiting the action to the word he gave her three keen slaps on the side of her little black face. The cruelly abused child went off around the house with a howl. Just why she should be "blamed" nobody could tell. The two little boys on the errand, after standing long enough to see it all, but without a word, proceeded across the fields and fences toward home. When they were about half way the youngest said, "It did me good to see Brown slap that little nigger." The older brother gave a slight grunt of recognition but not of assent, for it was manifest that he did not share his younger brother's feelings. The matter was dropped and they talked of other things till they reached home, when the older one went and told their mother. As was her custom she called the little fellow up to give account, and as one sin leads to another (shame upon shame) he denied it. After all it was not altogether untrue for him to

deny it for it was not the real nature of the boy that had felt "good" at seeing the act of cruelty but sin that had crept in. It was a most singular and strange temporary relapse into barbarity. That a little fellow, born and bred of a Christian mother, who had learned his a.b.c's from the New Testament and had been taught to be kind to everything, who would be grief-stricken at the death of a pet chicken, could have a "good" feeling on seeing an innocent child cruelly abused, only because it was black, is one of the strange anomalies in human nature that remains a profound mystery. It is this depravity in us that makes men and women rush to see the bull-fights, the wrestling matches and to the arena of the pugilists.

All care should be taken to eradicate this evil nature from the hearts of children from their very infancy. War stories should not be told them nor war-like toys provided them, such as pistols, guns and swords. Our histories used in the schools should not describe the bloody battle field but treat of the peaceful and useful occupations of man. All outcroppings of cruelty to insects, birds, animals and to one another should be quickly observed and [1] nipped in the bud. The principle of love, kindness and compassion should be diligently and daily taught.

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1 An idiom

STORY FIVE

HARD TIMES

The year in which I was born (1861) was the same year that great and dreadful war broke out between the North and the South. It swept over Tennssee, my native state, and on to the Gulf like a destructive fire, carrying with it death and desolation. Among those that fell before its onward sweep was my father. It left my mother a widow with six fatherless boys, the oldest ten and the youngest only six months old. Hard times followed.

John Bryant lived across the valley west of us on the hill at Granny Pugh's place. The neighbors also called her "Aunt Pugh." She was living with one of her married children and had rented her home to Mr. Bryant. He was a tanner by trade and ran a tanyard at the B. Irwin place about half a mile above the village of Shady Grove. He walked back and forth to his work mornings and evenings, a distance of three miles. I visited his tanyard once when a very small boy. There were many vats with hides in them submerged in oak-bark ooze. There was

also a big shelter under which to work and to hang the hides to dry. He had just taken a hide from the vat and had it stretched on a table rubbing the pelt off with an iron instrument. He resembled a carpenter in his motions as he pushes the plane. The water from the wet hide would fly several feet as he pushed his instrument over it. I had to get back further away to keep it from flying on me and soiling my Sunday clothes. "It spits" he said. To protect his own clothes he had on a leather apron.

He not only made leather but also he made the shoes for his family, for in those days almost every head of a family was a shoe-maker. "Store shoes," by those able to afford them, were mostly for Sunday wear only. The smaller children usually went bare-footed till Christmas and some of them all winter. In no case did a child get more than one pair of shoes for the winter season. Till five years old I was of those that went bare-footed all winter. The first pair of shoes I ever owned were cast-off shoes which really were not a *pair* at all for they didn't match. Uncle Young Harvill had several boys. Frank was about my age. Polk, the son of Mr. Bryant, was another lad about my size. The custom of those days, in making shoes, was to make one of a pair out of flanky leather. Flanky leather is the leather

made from the skin at the flanks of the animal. It is very porous, lets in the water and in wearing stretches all out of shape. If a shoe had a flanky place in it, and one of a pair was almost sure to have, that place was certain to come to a hole first. It thus happened with the last year's shoes of Frank and Polk, the flanky shoe of each had come to holes, leaving the other pretty sound. A bright idea struck my little friends. They each gave me the good shoe. I was delighted. When we put the shoes together they were slightly different in size and were both for the same foot; but this didn't matter so much as I could soon make one shape itself over to the other foot. Proud of them? Much prouder than many a boy now is of a new pair. I named them Frank and Polk in honor of my little benefactors.

In summer the wants of little folks were few. When company came we usually slept on a pallet, which consisted of a quilt spread down on the floor, and it was not such an uncommon thing to have to sleep on a pallet even when company didn't come. It was much harder than a Japanese bed. For clothing all we needed was a long shirt that came down a little below the knees, while a hat was only in the way and to get lost. When company came we hid till they went away. There were plenty of places to hide. We could run

upstairs, into the kitchen, behind the house or out in the orchard. If it were only Aunt Sally, Granny Pugh, or some old motherly person like that, we didn't mind so much to be seen; but if any one came bringing their little girls then we were off like a streak. If we could get a shy look at them through the half-open door or from around the corner of the house we were delighted, for even to a small country boy there was something attractive about little girls with their clean white pinafores and braided hair tied with a ribbon.

When I was about five years old my mother married a second time to J. N. Puckett. He had been appointed by Governor Brownlow, to represent Hickman County in the State Legislature in 1865, and had just finished his term of office at the time of their marriage. When he came to our home he wore a broad cloth suit and a silk hat. We called it a beegum hat. He had saved some money and was liberal in spending it on the family. He also had read medicine some and for a number of years after entering our family was rather successful as a practicing physician. He was called a botanic doctor, or, as some called it an "herb doctor." Those of the allopathic school made all manner of fun of the "herb doctor" with his roots and teas. But after all the medical

world is rapidly coming around to that view, and "strong" medicines, which is only another name for poisons, are going more and more out of use. It was he that bought me my first new pair of shoes. He bought them in Nashville, Tennessee, and they were called in those days, bootees, but they were not so different from the high laced shoes of the present time. When I put them on I was afraid I would get the bottoms of them dirty. They were only to be worn on Sunday.

When I was twelve years old Mr. Whitson came to the village and set up his picture gallery. It was only a tent. He stayed several weeks. He made pictures on tin plates and for this reason they were called tintype. Everybody was going to the village to have a picture made, for Mr. Whitson was a skilled artist of his kind. He didn't say, "Come back day after to-morrow and I will show you the proof;" but after going into his little dark room a few minutes he would come out again with the picture in his hand and in a little while he would have it all fixed up to take home with you. People liked that and especially the boys for they usually went on Saturday afternoons to have their pictures made and they wanted them to show to the girls next day, Sunday being the day when

the young men visited the young ladies. Samples of his work were hung up in a frame on the outside of the tent. People stood around and looked at them and passed criticisms as to which they thought were the best. Old Uncle Davy Anderson, I remember, was especially pleased with the likeness of Jim Savage, and even after he got down to the front of the store where another crowd was standing around he kept talking about what a good likeness Jim Savage's was. I think however the "spirits" in Uncle Davey that had loosened his tongue, was prompting him to praise Jim's likeness more than his love for art.

I had never had a picture taken, for in those days we always said *taken*, but people now usually say *made*. My mother had cut down a pair of pa's old broad cloth trousers that he used to wear when a member of the "legislater" (legislature) and had made me a brand new pair out of them. They were lined too. I had never had such a wonderful pair of trousers before. I also had a new coat and a shirt that buttoned up at the back. This new fashion was just coming in and everybody most wanted a new-style shirt. I mean the young people, for the old men didn't take to them. When their wives would want them to be in fashion and ask to make them a shirt that

1 Almost.

buttoned up behind they generally rebelled. "Can't scratch," they would say. It has taken forty years for the younger generation to learn that our fathers were right. Shirts now open in front. My new coat was no make-believe from an old one made over, but a sure-'nough new one. It was made of home made gray "jeans" (jean). I helped our mother to make the cloth, filled the quills, spun some of the thread and kept hot coals on the old oven lid beneath her feet to keep them warm, while she wove the cloth. As everybody else was having their pictures taken I w nted mine taken too. Another reason why I wanted it was because I had my first Sunday suit and I wanted to see how I looked in it. Mother consented and pa agreed to take me and pay for it.

Mr. Whitson charged twenty-five cents a piece for pictures. I only had one made. I have it yet. Perhaps you would like to know just how that first likeness looked that was made on a Saturday evening forty years ago when I had on my first Sunday suit of home-

made "jeans" and daddy's old broadcloth pantaloons and a newfangled shirt that opened in the back.

It is good to be trained in the school of hard times provided we are thoughtful and learn the lessons it teaches. Most of the world must pass through this school and all should know something of what it means that we may know how to help, and to sympathize with others.

STORY SIX

FUN

SLIDING DOWN THE HILL

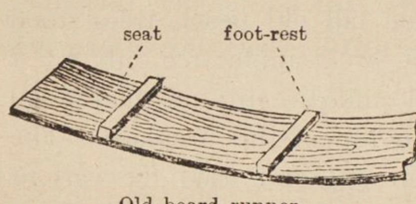
An old log house stood down in the bottom near the creek. Some tall old peach trees stood around it, and also a sweet-apple tree only a few rods away. The stick-and-dirt chimney had fallen down [1] even with the top of the fireplace. The floor had been taken out and used for various purposes and the old house turned into a sheep pen. The boards on the roof, which were three-foot boards, were weather beaten and turned up at the lower end.

Beyond the old house was a steep hill that stood out in the field which had once been cultivated, but, being rather steep for cultivation, it had been left to grow up in briers and broom-sage. At the top of the hill was a level place reaching almost to the fence on the upper side of the field. A large white-oak tree stood on this level place. It had spreading branches that cast a cool shade. At the foot, the steep hill gradually sloped off into the level ground which we called

1 Taera

the "bottom." Lands along the streams are usually called "bottom" lands, because they are the lowest. Patches of briers grew along the foot of the steep hill with here and there an open space between them.

Some of the boards on the old house were almost a foot wide. These made excellent runners on which to slide down the steep hill. A thick piece of plank was nailed across the back part of the board a few inches from the end. Another was nailed on near the front end. This was for the feet to rest against. The front end was slightly cupped up by the sun which enabled it to slip over the ground. We sat on the back end just behind the cross-piece.



Old board runner

Here we are now at the top of the steep hill with our board runners in trim. The broomsage has been mashed down smooth by sliding over it. Two or three boys are ready to start, one right after the other. One is a little timid and says to the other, "You go first." The first to start lays his board in the slick path and gets on. He keeps his feet out on the ground till he is ready. On go his feet and down he starts almost like a

flying bird, with his arms stretched out on either side to keep his balance. Another starts right after him and still a third. The first boy's board strikes a bush and he is thrown off. He grabs it up and scuffles to one side, but finds it hard to stop, and rolls like a big ball down into the briers. The other two go flying by and land far out in the "bottom" exultant over the fun. The first boy crawls out of the briers and tells them they needn't laugh for he got awfully scratched up. Soon they are all at the top of the hill again ready for another slide with all the accidents that usually accompany such sport.

It was great fun for us boys, but rather hard on the seat of our trousers and caused our mother to threaten not to let us play at it any more. But when the next time came around we pleaded and promised to be careful and she usually gave in.

You have read about Ned and his new sled I suppose. Ned it seems was inclined to be lazy, but according to the story told of him, he was somewhat of a poet. This may account for his being disinclined to work, as poets are not noted for being very industrious. However this may be, Ned was out one day with his playmates sliding down the hill and he had a brand new sled. How he obtained it is not stated. Possibly it was given him by his father to encourage him

to be more dilligent in his studies. At any rate Ned enjoyed it exceedingly, but he didn't quite relish having to climb back up to the top of the hill every time. So he got off to one side and began to turn his troubles into rhyme:

'Tis royal fun, cried lazy Ned,
To coast upon my fine new sled
And beat the other boys.
But then I cannot bear to climb
This tiresome hill, for every time
It more and more annoys.

Then the writer who gave us Ned's poetry adds some of his own by way of comment—

So while his school-mates glided by
And gladly tugged up hill to try
Another merry race,
Too indolent to share their plays,
Ned was compelled to stand and gaze
While shivering in his place.

The writer moralizes further about the un furtunate lad, saying that because he dreaded the "bugbear of up hill" he "died a dunce at last." About this we need not go into detail now. Let us throw the mantle of charity over poor Ned; only let us remember that if we would have the fun of sliding down hill we must also take the trouble of climbing up.

The Big Hill

North of the house beyond the creek was the "big hill." We called it the "big hill" because it was a little taller and a little steeper than the others. It was covered with trees except on some parts where it was too steep for trees to grow. On the steepest parts grew only a few scrubby trees of small growth. Among others was the black haw bush. Its fruit grew in clusters and looked like grapes. Late in the fall after the frost came they were good to eat. Great boulders lay half buried in the side of the big hill. Now and then a ledge of rock cropped out. At the foot of the big hill was a bank about fifteen feet high, beneath which ran the creek. Just under the high bank was a long hole of water. When the neighbor boys would come on a visit we would sometimes go over on the "big hill" to play. It was difficult to climb up its steep side. We would have to catch to the small bushes and ledges of rock. Some times we would take hold of a rock that was not sticking very deep in the ground and it would pull out. We would then almost tumble backwards down the steep precipice. When almost up to the top we would come to the haw bushes and would eat haws for a while. But the best fun was to pull out the boulders from the

ground and send them flying and leaping to the bottom. Sometimes we would succeed in prizing out one almost as large as a cart wheel. I have seen them jump clear over the tree tops. Sometimes their last leap would be right from the top of the high bank; then they would clear the stream and land far over on the other side. If one chanced to strike the big hole of water it would make a sound like thunder, the spray would fly twenty feet high and make a rain-bow.

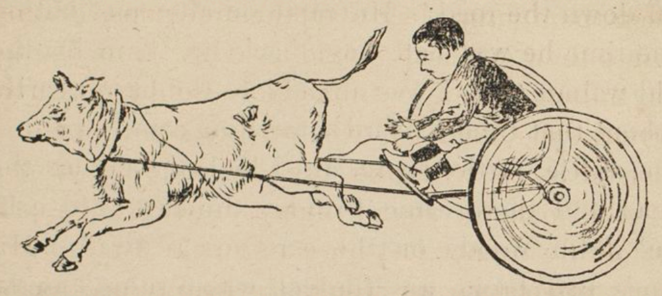
Sometimes we would steal away on Sunday and go over on the "big hill"; but this was a violation of our mother's rule for she never allowed us to engage in such things on the Lord's day.

The big hill is still there and some of the trees, while the same stream flows at its base. Other boys play on the "big hill" now, but where are those that once played there? Echo answers, Where ?

"*Head Brindy*"

Little Berry and I each had a calf. Mine was named Brindy and his Bright. Brindy was a brindle, but Bright was a solid white with not a black hair on him. It was because of their color that we named them Brindy and Bright. We had trained them to work in the harness. We

built us some carts with shafts. We also made our harness—hames, collar backband and traces. The barn was several hundred yards from the



"Head Brindy"

house. We were in the habit of taking our calves to the barn after a drive, to feed them. We went on the principle that in training calves reward was better than punishment. For lines we used bark or any kind of string we could pick up. We tied the line around the calf's horns close to the head. An ox is much more easily managed in this way than by a bit in its mouth. One day we had a runaway from the house to the barn. My brother used to tell it and laugh till the tears ran down his face. The joke was on me. Somehow this was usually the case. He tells it even yet. I have heard the joke so often I can almost repeat it word for word:—

"We had been drivin' our calves that mornin' and they had worked fine, so we thought we'd

take 'em to the barn and give 'em some hay. I had mine better trained than John Moody did his'n. I started off ahead an' was just a streakin' it off down the road. He came on after me, but by the time he was half way, back up there by the old walnut tree, I was already to the barn nearly. About that time I heard something comin' behind me, rattle, rattle, rattle, an' I looked back up the road and there came Brindy, the little old calf, an' John Moody on the cart just a flyin'. His lines had broke an' the calf was a runin' away. There he wuz, sittin' on the cart holdin' on to both shafts and his hair, which was pretty long and just as white as flax, was just a flyin' in the wind like a whip cracker, ha, ha, ha; ha, ha, ha! [Bends half double with laughter, putting his hands on his knees] By the time I could get Bright reined out into the fence corner he came flyin' by me just like a streak o' lightnin', the little old cart a bouncin' first over on one wheel then the other. He was yellin' just as loud as he could, head Brindy, head Brindy, head Brindy! But I couldn't head the little old calf. They had done gone by me before I could do anything. The last I saw of them they were goin' around the corner o' the barn, one wheel o' the cart struck the corner and over it went and pitched him off down the hill about twenty feet; I guess

he rolled part o' the way though. When I found he wuzn't hurt much I laughed till I was sore for a week."

Learning to Swim

I remember both the time and the place very distinctly. It was just below the wash place in a deep round hole of water by a large old sycamore stump. The hole in the center was over my head, in reality not so very deep, but to a small boy a "mighty deep hole." The bottom was gravel and gradually sloped down from the edge to the center. It was considered one of the essentials for every boy to know how to swim or else he was thought to he lacking in those necessary qualities that went to make up boydom. If a boy couldn't swim be was looked upon as too much like a girl, but as I had long been out of dresses there could be no longer any doubt in my mind as to the class I belonged to and to put the matter forever at rest with all my chums I was fully determined to learn how to swim.

One difficutly I encountered was that I considered it dangerous to go in more than waist deep so that by the time I would lie down and strike a lick or two I would be out against the shore; another was that I couldn't make my feet

and hands work together at the same time. When I would get my hands to paddling about right my feet would forget to work; then when I would start my feet my hands would change motion and try to do just like my feet. Again I found it very hard to keep my head above water long enough to get my limbs in motion.

But in the face of all these obstacles I finally caught the lick it was done with and learned how to swim. In the first place I ventured in up to my neck and had more depth so that my knees wouldn't strike the bottom, and more distance to practice in before I ran ashore. I got my feet and hands to working together and was conscious of the fact that I was actually swimming. After a few trials I ventured the attempt to swim clean across the big hole right over the deepest part that was deeper than my head. I did it, then back again. Of course I had to tell the other boys to watch me while I did it a second time. It was a fact and no doubt about it and I had witnesses to it. We soon hurried back to the house for I wanted to tell mother all about how I could swim clear across the big round hole below the wash place where the water was over my head.

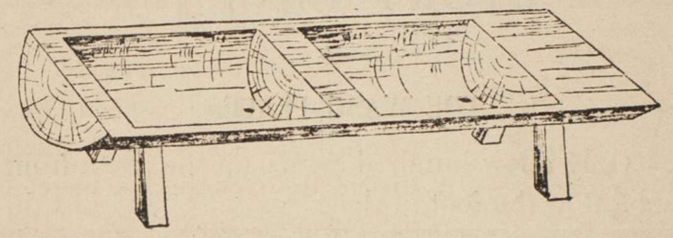
STORY SEVEN

THE WASH PLACE

Only a few hundred yards up the creek from the barn at the foot of the "big hill" and just on the opposite side of the big hole of water from the high bank, was the wash place. A great old sycamore tree stood on the bank of the creek by the big hole of water. The stream had washed under one side of the tree and left the roots bare. They were white and smooth, and projected out over the blue, clear water. The sandbar consisted not so much of sand as the name would indicate, but mostly of white round stones of various sizes and so scrupulously clean that one could lie down on them without soiling his clothes in the least. It was an ideal place to spread out wool to dry after washing it.

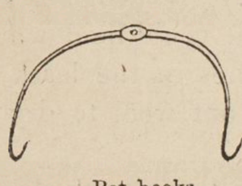
Beneath the old sycamore tree stood the wash house, which was only a cabin just tall enough to stand straight in, built of round logs. The main object of it was to keep off the rain. There was no floor save the clean white gravel. In it was a wash trough that stood on legs. It was about six feet long, and consisted of a poplar

log split open and one half hollowed out into a trough. There was a partition in the middle



Wash trough

dividing the trough into two sections, one for the colored clothes and the other for white clothes. On one end was a broad flat surface where the clothes were battled, or beaten, with a battling stick. This loosened up the dirt and made the scrubbing on the washboard much easier, though it was rather hard on the buttons and frequently on a Sunday morning when one took out his clean shirt to put on, he would find a button broken in the middle and one half gone while the other half



Pot hooks

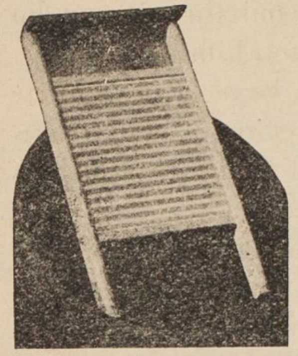
would be hanging only by one eye, or likely a button or two would be missing altogether. Then there would be a call for mother to come and sew on a button. If mother was busy all the assistance the lad would get would be to tell him

where he could find a needle and thread, and he would have to sew on his button himself.

The wash kettle was a large iron pot that stood on three legs. It also had ears on each side in which to catch the pot hooks when it was necessary to hang the kettle over the fire instead of setting it on its legs. But at the wash place it always sat on some good solid stones carefully put under the legs. Sometimes in selecting the stones, which were picked up on the bank of the creek, we would get hold of a flint which when it got hot would burst and sound like a gun, would scatter the fire and maybe upset the kettle of boiling clothes. When not in use the kettle was turned over so that water would not stand in it and rust it.

Wash kettle

One Sunday some boys came along on their way to the river to go in swiming. They were idle boys and, as is usually the case with idle boys, they thought of mischief. They called it fun but when fun works harm to others it is no longer fun but wickedness. "I'll bet I can break one o' them kittle legs out," said one. "Bet you can't" said another. There were plenty of smooth round stones lying about everywhere just the right size


Wash board

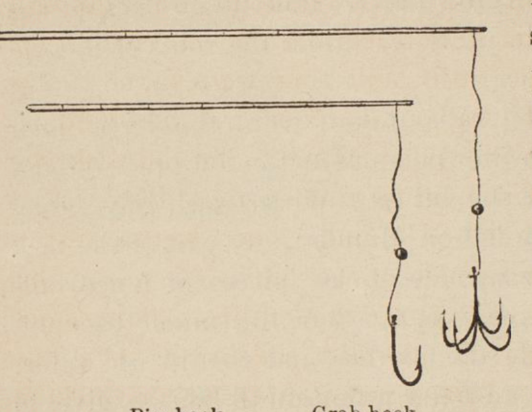
to throw. Whack! went one against the bottom of the kettle, Whack! went another, and another—whack, whack, whang, whang! whack they rattled. In a little while every one of the legs of the kettle was broken. About two-thirds of one was gone; one half of another; while the third one broke out a piece of the bottom with it leaving an ugly hole. This caused our mother a lot of trouble, for it was in the time of those dark days just after the war when there was no father to bear the burden of such losses. Uncle Baz Bates had a black-smith's shop not so far away, and his son Wack kindly made a leg with a plate to one end of it which was made to fit carefully over the inside of the hole. Another iron plate was neatly fitted to the out side, and a hole in the center let the leg pass through. A small hole was made in the leg and an iron key driven in securely, held all in place. The work was so well done that it was water tight. Thus mended, the old kettle lasted for many years and was still in use long after its original owner had gone to that better land where wash kettles are no more needed and where no

bad boys come along to do mischief. But that was a long, long time ago. Let us try to forget all about it and hope that the boys learned to do better as they grew older. Let us go back to the big blue hole of water under the roots of the old sycamore tree.

Some flat rails, taken from the fence near by, rested on the roots of the tree on one side and the bank on the other. When wash day came, and it usually fell on Monday, my part of the task was to gather up dry sticks, pieces of fence rails and bark to keep the fire burning under the pot, also to [1] battle the clothes and to dip up water. These things and the attention I had to give to my pin-hook kept me pretty busy, sometimes I would even have to be called I would become so occupied with my fishing. I usually begged the pin from mother with which I made my hook. For a sinker I tied a little pebble to the line above the hook, and for bait I sought worms, grasshoppers and crickets. If by a happy chance I should hook a silver-side and bring him out glittering, flouncing and floundering on the shore my heart would leap almost as fast and as high as the little fish. One could lie down on those flat rails, which were only a few inches above the water, and look down into the deep, blue hole

1 beat

and see the fish floating lazily around down there near the bottom. Far back under the projecting roots of the old sycamore tree one might also see a shy sun perch as flat as a [1] pan-cake, edged up with his narrow little eyes, and so still nothing could be seen to move but a gentle waving of his tail. Jar the bank a little and off he would dart so quickly that you couldn't tell where he went. No use looking for the perch any more, but look out into the deep hole where the sun falls on the gravelly bottom. Don't give up too quickly for they are there, a brown fish with dark stripes across the back. They are so much like the stones in the bottom that you must look very carefully to see them. By a curious oversight of the book makers I do not find the name of this fish nor its picture in my unabridged dictionary, but we called it the "hog-sucker." As



Pin hook Grab-hook

1 Senbei

is the case with all of the sucker family they cannot be caught by hook and bait, but may be hooked up by means of a grab-hook.

Once Gooch and Bob (Robert) were helping mother wash, only they didn't help much for they were too little; but they were taken along for company, for our mother was afraid to be down at the wash place alone. She didn't know what bad man might come along. Bob was a neighbor's child. He and Gooch were crossing over to the other side of the big hole on the flat rails. They were slipping their feet along sideways holding each other by the hand. One lost his balance. This made him hold on all the tighter to the hand of the other. In they both went and sank to the bottom. Mother heard the scramble and ran. The water was clear as could be, and she could see them. There they were scrambling out toward the shore.

One could lie down face foremost on those flat rails on a clear day, with here and there only a few white clouds floating lazily over head far up in the sky, and see two worlds, one below just like the one above, only inverted, and the one seemed almost as real as the other.

The old wash-house has long since disappeared; she that washed the clothes beneath the friendly branches of the great sycamore tree

is also at rest; the little boys that played on the bank have grown gray and scattered, while the clear little brook as it ripples over the white pebbles seems to murmur,

"Men may come and men may go
But I go on forever."

STORY EIGHT

IN PERILOUS PLACES

"That Big Thing"

Not more than fifty yards above the old wash place was another deep hole of water. On either side of the stream stood some large sycamores. A pole about fifty feet long extended from one tree to the other. The fence around the field crossed the stream at this place and a water-gap was suspended across from one tree to the other on the long pole. The deep hole lay partly beneath the roots of one of the sycamore trees, and the water had left many of the roots bare. It was an ideal place for fishing. Late one evening in summer just after a rain, Little Berry and I prepared our hooks, dug some bait and went down to the water-gap hole a fishing. The water was muddy and it was a good time to catch cats (cat fish). We had not been there so very long and had not yet caught any, but I was getting a bite. All of a sudden my brother got up and said, "Let's go to supper," and with these words he started for the house. As I was

getting a bite I tried to persuade him to wait a bit but to no purpose. He was up and gone in no time. I hated to leave such good prospects, so fished on. Being left alone however and as it was growing dusk I soon gave it up and followed. When I got to the house I found him in a great state of excitement. "Didn't you hear me a callin' you?" he asked.

"No, what was the matter?"

"Why, didn't you see that big thing a comin' down the hill on the other side of the creek over there?"

"No what was it?"

"I don' no. It was as big as a dog and had a short tail. It was a wild-cat I expect. I was afraid to tell you when we were at the creek for I was afraid you would be so [1] scared you'd fall in and drown."

It might have been a wild-cat or a fox, but at any rate I was not eaten up nor didn't get so scared as to fall in and drown. It was a case where [2] "ignorance was bliss."

In a Trap

Lēvie (Olevia) was Bob's sister. She had come on a visit. Gooch had learned to [3] stand on his head in a chair, a great feat for a small boy.

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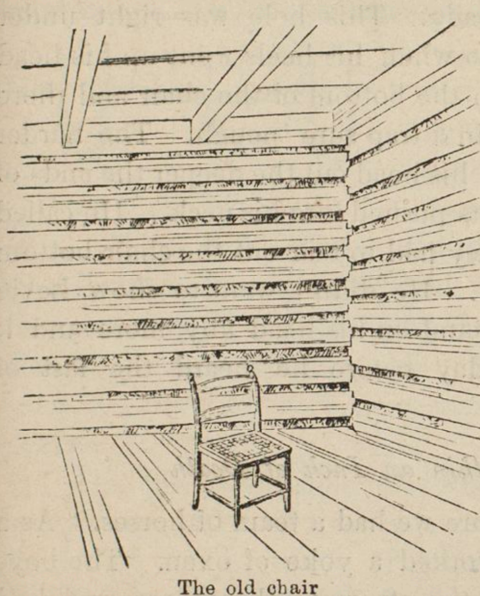
1 Frightened 2 Shiranuga hotoke 3 Sakadachi wo suru

He wanted to show Levie what he could do. "Levie, Levie, watch me stand on my head in this chair. Watch me stand on my head in this chair. Watch me stand on my head in this chair. Watch me, Levie." Finally he got Levie's attention, for usually when visitors came there were several [3] juvenile voices all going at the same time.


The old chair

Now everything was ready and Levie and all the rest were eagerly looking on to see the performance. Down went two little hands a hold of each side of the chair. Down went a little head in the center of the chair bottom, and up went two little heels toward the ceiling. It was an old-fashioned chair with a hickory-bark bottom. The bark was first split into strips then

3 Kodomo-no

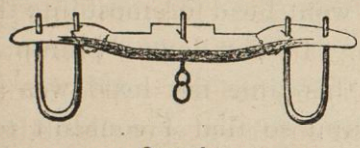
peeled off from the tree and woven in for the bottom of the chair. The splits were old and had begun to break in the center where there was a small hole already. This hole was right under Gooch's head so when his heels went up his head pushed through the bottom of the chair and there he was caught in a trap sure 'nough. The harder he tried to pull his head out the deeper the ends of the broken splits pushed into his neck. He called for help and they had to tear out the chair bottom to release him. He didn't want to show Levie how he could stand on his head any more and it was many a day before he heard the last of the joke.

Within an Inch of Death

It was before we had a team of horses. As a substitute we worked a yoke of oxen. The boys had yoked up the steers to the wagon and had gone up the long hill back of the house to the old field to move some fence or something of the kind. When they reached the top of the hill coming back the steers wouldn't hold the wagon back and the more it pushed upon them the faster they got till they were soon in a run. Away they went down the long hill toward the house as hard as they could [2] tear. The wagon

1 Went 2 Run

was empty. Two of the brothers jumped off when the oxen started but Meriman who was much smaller clung on. He had hold of a standard next to one of the hind wheels and as he hugged round it his head was almost in the flying wheel, so near that the spokes were brushing his hair. There mother was, standing in the back door with both arms stretched up in great excitement, watching the whole affray. Fortunately the little fellow clung to his standard and kept his place till the steers were again gotten under control.



Ox yoke

The big round hole was where we went in swimming. It was [1] over a boy's head standing flat-footed on the bottom. There was a bank about four feet high by the side of it. One day we were all in swimming and as usual were jumping from the high bank into the pool. Some would jump with feet foremost and arms out and would go down with a splatter; others would jump horizontally and strike the water broadside on their stomachs; while the more skilled would turn a [2]summerset, shoot down head foremost and come to the surface of the water right side up. I was one

1 Deeper than 2 Tombokaeri

of the smallest of the lot. I wanted to turn a summerset too, but this was a feat I never had performed. I watched the other boys though and thought I could do it. With a little running start from the bank, over I went head foremost into the middle of the big hole. I went down [1] plump to the bottom, and by this time my head was all turning round and round so that I couldn't tell which way was up or down. I began to want breath and was awfully frightened. I scrambled along on the bottom and finally got out gasping. My, I was glad to be out again! One summerset in the water was enough for me; I have never attempted it again.

It was sheep shearing time and the sheep were driven up out of the pasture and put into the stable. There was no father in those days to superintend it but the shearing was left to the boys, none of them very old. Some of the neighbor's sheep were with ours and Gus (Augustus) came to help. Gus was not a very large boy, either, and was always ready for fun. There were several large [2] wethers in the flock. When the shearing was done the boys thought it would be fun to ride some of the large old wethers out at the front gate. Two or three were caught. The front gate was opened, then the

1 Completely 2 Kin-kiri hitsuji

stable door, and the sheep were turned out. Each boy was to ride his sheep out from the stable through the big gate. There was a mud hole at the big gate and sheep do not like mud. Having been up all day they were auxious to get back to the pasture, so when the door was opened out they rushed. Here came the boys on the wethers. Gus gave a yell, "Charge Tommy!" Just about the time he reached the big gate on the old wether, partly from fright and partly to [1]clear the mud, the sheep gave a leap and left Gus in the air. He came down flat in the middle of the mudhole. The soft mud saved him from such a hard fall as he otherwise would have received, but it did not save the seat of his trousers. What his back got from his mother when he got home perhaps I had better not say.

1 Jump over

STORY NINE

SOME EARLY PLAYMATES

A range of hills lay between my home and some of my early playmates. These hills were covered with tall forest trees—ash, oak, poplar, sugartree, elm, chestnut and hickory. Also the modest little dog-wood that was contented to grow beneath its larger brothers, was conspicuous in spring time with its snow-white blossoms. A road that was sometimes a wagon road and at other times only a path along on one side of the hill or the other, led up the hollow and over the hill to where Crittenden and Bob (Robert) lived. At the head of the hollow the road passed through a short lane which separated two farms, then down on the other side through the woods to a big gate opening into the spring lot. It was called the ''spring lot'' because a spring where the horses drank and from which the family used water, was in that lot. From the big gate the road passed on to the crib and stables to the front yard gate.

The house was a great barn-like old building with a double piazza, one upstairs and one down,

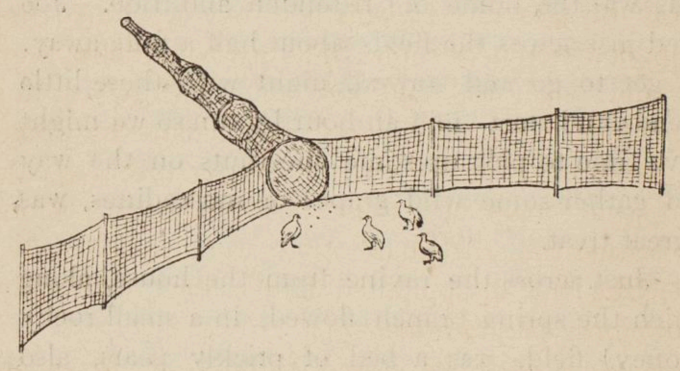
with a long straight flight of stairs running up by the wall from one floor to the other. The upper piazza had banisters, or a hand-rail, all around the edge to keep the children from falling out. It was an interesting old mansion with its tall chimneys and fireplaces upstairs and down, and many strange nooks and corners, some of which we were afraid to enter, for we were afraid of seeing "hants" or something like that. The word *hants* is corrupted from *haunts* and means *ghosts*. This was the home of Crittenden and Bob. Joe lived just across the fields about half a mile away. To get to go and stay all night with these little friends and start [1] half an hour by sun so we might have time to pick up some chestnuts on the way and gather some wild grapes or muscadines, was a great treat.

Just across the ravine from the house, along which the spring branch flowed, in a small rocky (stoney) field, was a bed of prickly pears, also called "cactus," but prickly pears was the name they usually went by. We were as 'fraid of them as if they had been a nest of snakes, for we had been told that if we got one of the prickles in our foot we couldn't pull it out, but that it would keep on going in till it came out on the other side. We would cautiously go near enough to throw

1 "Half an hour by sun" equals, *when the sun was half an hour high.*

rocks at them but no nearer. They looked very hateful to me and filled me with a kind of horror. I have since learned they are not to be so dreaded as we little folks imagined.

"Uncle William," as we had been taught to call him out of respect, though in reality he was only a very distant cousin, Crittenden and Bob's father, used to net quails and take them to town to sell. The nearest market was Nashville, fifty miles away. Sometimes it was necessary to keep



Quail net

them quite a while before hauling them off. The net consisted of a long knit bag with hoops along at intervals to hold it up; then there were two wings stretching out on both sides. On drizzly days was the best time to net the birds since they would not fly so readily at such times as in clear weather. The bird hunter would go about the

brier patches in the old fields till he found a covey of quails then he would carefully and quietly set his net in a convenient place. Going then around on the opposite side of them, he would quietly and slowly drive the partriges toward the open wings of the net. Not knowing its design the innocent little creatures would allow themselves to be driven along till they came to the entrance of the long pouch, which they would enter, supposing it was only a way of escape. The further they would go the smaller would become the way till finally they would reach the end and find themselves imprisoned. Usually if any were caught the whole covey were captured for it is the nature of quails to stay together. Sometimes however before reaching the cruel snare, they would rise and fly, leaving the disappointed bird catcher with only an empty bag to hold.

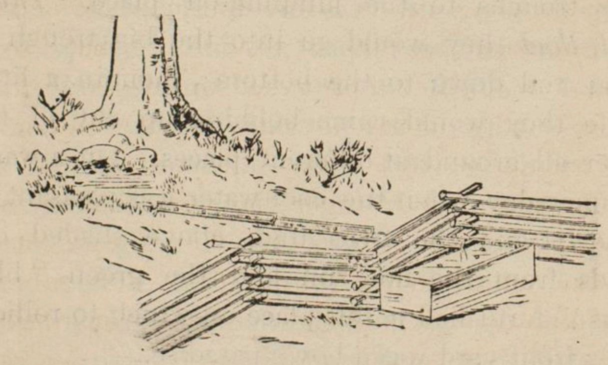
Once when we visited the home of Crittenden and Bob, their father had caught a large lot of about sixty and had them in a cage feeding them on wheat till the time came to take them to town. They took us upstairs to show us the birds. Crittenden took one—a bob-white or male bird—out of the cage that we might see it better. At first he did not move, but while we were so interested in examining his feathers and the white stripes about

his head, out he flopped from Crittenden's hands. If ever a boy felt like he had "let a bird go" poor Crittenden was that boy. The birds had been up long enough to be a little tame and Bobwhite lit on the hand rail of the old piazza and looked back at his pursuer for an auxious little boy was half bent slipping up to catch him. But the liberated bird had had enough of caged life and with a *fru-u-u-u*! of his wings off he flew to the big woods and that was the last we saw of him. While I was sorry for my playmate I could only feel glad for the little prisoner now again happy and free. As his father had not taken particular count of how many birds there were it was never discovered that one was missing.

Joe, whose full name was Joseph, was a jolly, rollicking boy always ready for fun. Sometimes we went and spent the night with him also. Joe's father was a good provider for his family and always, kept plenty to eat. Biscuit and coffee and ham gravey to sop the biscuit in, and some cream and sugar for the coffee with syrup for the biscuit, if one didn't care for the gravey, constituted the breakfast. Such a breakfast was every boy's delight and the grown people, even, did not object to it.

Another attraction about Joe's home was the spring. Unlike the spring at our home, one

didn't have to go down the hill to get to it nor carry the bucket of water up the hill again back to the house. This was of great importance to a boy whose duty it was to carry water. The spring at Joe's home was just across the green lawn from the door, so near that the distance was not anything. A smooth path led from the doorstep out to it. Usually a calf stayed in the yard and kept the grass nipped down as close as a lawn mower. Joe's mother kept butter jars and milk buckets in one part of the spring, but the water for drinking was dipped from the fountain itself. The clear water flowed over a clean gravel bottom. A grove of [1] locust trees cast their shade over head. The sun broke through in many places and flecked the green grass and turned it into a beautiful



The spring and watering-trough

1 Akashiya

carpet with figures. Some small, straight chestnut logs, about six inches through, had been split open and the split side hollowed out into troughs. These were laid end to end from the spring to the horse lot and made a little [1]race for the water to run along. It went through the fence and poured into a large trough where the horses, sheep and cows came to drink. We loved to watch the little waterfall as it poured into the trough. A hickory tree stood over the spring. The "hicker-nuts" (hickory nuts), with the hull still on, would drop from the tree. They were as round as a ball. It was great fun to put them into the little race and see the water back up against them till they would begin to roll. We would have a whole train of them chasing each other down the little long troughs to the jumping-off place. *Thud, thud, thud* they would go into the big trough of water and down to the bottom; then in a little while they would come bobbing up out of the water all around at different places. On a warm summer day when the cool water was pleasant to play in and the trees high above shaded our heads from the hot sun and the green "blue grass" furnished a soft place on which to rollick, Joe's front yard was a boy's paradise.

Another one of my playmates in those early

2 Suidō

days was John Mat. We were almost the same age. Only a fortnight between us. One may say we grew up together. John Mat's "grand-pa" was my stepfather. We often slept in the same bed. We have hunted chestnuts together; we have chased rabbits in the snow; we have hunted 'coons and 'possums at night; have rolled stones down the "big hill"; we have gone fishing together; we have slid down the hill on board runners; have ridden the calves and gone in swimming. Sometimes he would help me at my tasks—hoing corn, pulling weeds or going to drive up the cows from the pasture—that I might have more time to play with him. He was a great [1] mimic and could imitate animals, birds and people almost to perfection. Quick-witted and always ready with an answer. In books he could learn rapidly. But the tempter set his snare and John Mat became his captive. Evil habits were formed in his youth and when as a young man, he was thrown upon his own responsibilities, he went forth from the parental roof ill prepared to meet the great outside world. Good positions were open to him for he was capable, but he could not keep them. Failing in one thing he sought another, wandered here and there in search of employment, becoming more and more

1 Imitator

inefficient with each attempt, till at forty, he found himself homeless and friendless and a wreck on life's tempestuous sea. One day he was walking his solitary way on the streets of St. Louis and dropped dead. The sad, sad end of this once promising youth may be summed up in one word—*drink.*

When I think of the bright-eyed boy of forty years ago with whom I used to play my heart is sad, and I am constrained to offer a word of admonition to my youthful friends who are now where he once was, that they may not come to such an end as he did.

STORY TEN

PLAYING FOX

Children as readily take to the things of their environment as ducks do to water. Watch children at play and you will catch many glimpses of the customs of the people to whom they belong, and more particularly of the locality where they are brought up. A child of the city will put two chairs together in the middle of the room, will put his little sister on, ring the bell and be conductor on a street car; he will go to the shop to buy groceries; while the child in the country will go to the garden or cellar for them; he will draw a city with streets and houses and imitate city life generally. The child in the country harnesses his little brothers or playmates as mules, drives them to his imaginary plow or wagon; rides horse-back or acts horse himself; erects a log house of corncobs; builds fences around a minature farm; barks like a dog, cackles like a hen, crows like a rooster, lows like a cow, bleats like a sheep, whinneys like a horse, squeals like a pig, quacks like a duck and gobbles like a turkey. He runs like the dog, gallops like the horse, jumps

the fence like the sheep, climbs the trees like the squirrel, and comes out from his den under the table and is a wolf to frighten people out of their wits, or to pounce upon some unfortunate prey like daddy or a little sister.

One day we were returning from Uncle Young's. I don't know what was the occasion of our visit. It might have been just a social gathering of some kind, but I have a faint impression that it was on Sunday and we were returning from preaching held in his home. It was about a mile from his home to ours and the road, much of the way, was along the larger of the two small streams. Great masses of gravel of various sizes and worn smooth by being so often knocked against each other as they were washed down by the floods, lined the banks of the little zig-zag stream, and the road in many places was obliterated as often as there was a heavy rain. In the company were several little fellows about the same size and none of them very large. We had not gone far till one of the small boys changed into a fox, and the others into a pack of hounds. I was the fox and had a hopeful start of the dogs, and, for a young fox not so accustomed to the chase, was keeping my distance admirably well. At any rate it seemed so to me. But about the time I was at my best the unexpected happened—

an experience not so rare with little folks. I "stumped" my toe against a "rock," fell sprawling and struck my head against another rock. The sharp edge of the stone cut an ugly gash in my forehead just about the edge of the hair. The race was over. Bill, a young man of the neighborhood who happened to be near me, ran and picked me up. He pitied and petted me, spoke kind words to me and said, "Don't cry, don't cry, yes it was an awful hard fall and almost broke your little head." He took me to the edge of the creek, only a few steps away, and washed the blood from my face. My wound was temporarily bound up with a handkerchief and he carried me on his back the rest of the way home. This left a tender spot in my heart for Bill.

If I could leave this grateful feeling unmixed by any contrary action of his I would willingly do so; but Bill was like other thoughtless boys—and all boys are more thoughtless than they get to be when older—and sometimes did in his youth what he was ashamed of in later years. Several years had passed since Bill had picked up the wounded fox. I do not remember the reason why a number of the boys of the neighborhood happened to be together that day. It may have been a log-rolling, a house-raising or a road-working. Just what had brought together ten or a dozen lads on

the public road I cannot now say, yet such was the case and I was among the number. A nigger (negro) boy whose name was Jim came along riding a gray mule. Bill, as we called him, but whose proper name was William, gave the boys the wink and, stepping out into the middle of the road, called a halt. The boy on the mule stopped, for under the circumstances, however much he may have felt inclined to do so, he knew it would not be best to disobey orders. The hero of the occasion was in for having what some people called "fun," but its proper name was, *acting the bully*. A boy who acts the bully is one who domineers over another only when he has the decided advantage. He began to ply the colored boy with questions not so hard at first but with the purpose of leading on to something else. For a time the negro replied in a good-humored way. But his inquisitor was determined to humiliate him for he had set out for that very purpose. Bill's questions became insolent and insulting. The sunshine soon disappeared from the boy's face and changed into a black cloud, his countenance fell and the child of Ham became sullen and silent. Bill then proceeded to tell him how it happened that his nose was flat and his hair kinky. I could give his exact language, but as it showed a lack of reverence for the Creator I shall

not repeat it. He finally let the ill-treated lad pass by, but as he did so he raked the end of a stick in the dust behind his gray mule making the animal shy out against the fence and try to run.

The crowd scattered and we went home. On the way the incident was talked over. We felt that Bill didn't do right. "But," suggested one, "let's don't tell mother." We knew that if mother found it out, the next time she saw Bill he would take him to task for such conduct. And it may be that we ourselves felt a bit guilty for we were in Bill's crowd. But let us have another fox race.

John Bryant, had moved from the Granny Pugh place on the hill to another neighborhood four or five miles away, and was living on the Parker place. Changing with the progress of the times, he had closed out his tanyard and was now, with the assistance of his four boys, [1] running a farm. Little Berry and I had obtained permission from our mother to go and stay all night with Polk, Gus (Augustus) and Willie, and the visit was allowed to extend to the next day after dinner, it being Sunday. It was by special permission that we were allowed to spend Sunday away from home. But as Mr. Bryant was a very pious man and had family prayers at bed time our mother

1 Cultivating

thought it would be safe to give us this privilege. We were not accustomed to have family prayers at home and when the father called the family to order, opened the Bible and read a chapter, then prayed with all of us kneeling, it made a deep and lasting impression on me. That scene is before me still and I can hear the tone of his voice.

When dinner was over on the next day we began to think of home for it was no little distance and our road crossed over several hills and deep hollows. And besides much of the way was through deep forests where it began to get dark long before sundown. The Bryant boys, together with some of their little neighbors who had come to play with us, accompanied us part of the way. Our crowd consisted of at least half a dozen. Along the way we looked into the hollow trees for "varmunts" (wild animals), chased squirrels up the trees and watched them till they went in at a little round hole into their dens; looked down into the deep holes of water along the creek for fish; pushed down old rotten trees to see them fall and watched to see something run out from a peckerwood hole; plaited papaw whips and made them pop; jumped on brush piles to see if we might scare out a rabbit; took our stand a certain distance from a beech tree and bantered each other

to a throwing match at a spot on it; saw which could jump the furthest on a running jump; broke down the top of mullen stalks pointing them toward the home of our sweet-hearts and made the others guess who it was, until finally some one said. "Let's play fox." The vote was unanimous. We were now just coming to a farm-house with fields around it, the home of Polk McCaleb, a distant relative. The fox was soon selected by common consent. The lot fell on my brother. From past experience I was not anxious for the place, and beside I was among the smallest in the crowd and would not make a good fox. According to the rule relating to boy-foxes, no hound was to move out of his tracks nor give a yelp till the fox had been given [1]so many steps a head. This distance was defined in unmistakable terms by definite specifications—to a certain tree, big rock, or turn in the road. Also every hound must strictly follow the trail wherever it might lead and if any was caught breaking this rule by cutting across, he was out of the race. These regulations being carefully observed, the word was given by counting, *one; two; three.* The hounds leaped forward with a ypel and the race was on. The fox soon left the woods and [2]struck out across a stubble field. Since the wheat had been harvested the tall

1 A certain 2 Started

ragweeds had grown up taller than our heads, so that they almost hid both fox and hounds. I was the hunter to urge the hounds and watch the race. As they crossed the field all that could be seen were the heads of the fox and hounds bobbing up above the weeds. Running was difficult and their progress was much slower than when out in the open. The hounds kept up a continual yelping as is the nature of hounds at such times. Finally they came to a cross fence where the ground sloped down hill. The fox cleared the fence and sank into the tall weeds on the lower side, with the hounds in hot pursuit. Over they went one after another, and, according to hound nature, when they overtake their prey, siezed the helpless little animal which they were woolling without mercy. That jump over the fence though changed the fox back into a boy again as soon as he struck the ground, for some large boulders had been thrown out of the way of the plow into the fence corner and lay concealed in the tall weeds. One of them struck the shin just below the knee, tearing a great rent in my brother's Sunday trousers and peeling down the skin to the very bone over a space about the size of a postage stamp. In the excitement and general tumble up it was some little time before the dogs could be brought to order; but as soon

as they could be made to understand what had happened every hound as if by magic, instantly vanished. All the boys expressed their regrets and of course everybody was [1] mighty sorry it happened. Of course we all wanted to know just how it occurred and how he fell and which place struck first and if we had known or had the least idea that the fox was hurt so, we wouldn't have been woolling him so unmercifully and all that, for at such times it will not do to stand by and say nothing and we had to express our sympathy in some way.

When the pain had subsided a little we went up to the house which was not very far away, and our cousin's wife dressed and bound up the wound. "Does it hurt now" some one would ask about every three seconds. The evening was now far spent and the shadow of the tall trees had already stretched far out across the fields. The crowd broke up and we hurried toward home as fast as a limping boy on a sore and stiffened leg could go. We were especially anxious to get beyond the big woods before the sun went down.

1 Very

STORY ELEVEN

ENTERTAINING STRANGERS

It was a rule of our home that no stranger should be turned away. In those days the pack-peddler made frequent calls. The pack of goods that he carried on his back was sometimes very heavy, weighing as much as sixty or seventy-five pounds. I don't remember of our ever having turned one away who came and asked for a night's lodging. The next morning he would always offer to pay his bill, but this was usually declined. He would, however, make a present from among his goods to show his appreciation of the hospitality shown him. Aelic Barker, a Jew, for a number of years peddled goods in our county. He came to be so well known that he ceased to be a stranger. Finally he accumulated enough money to set up a store in town after which he ceased to be a peddler. His wife was said to have been a very ugly woman. Some one was rude enough to ask him if his wife was pretty. He replied, "She is pretty to me." Be careful how you speak lightly of others for however they may seem to you they are "pretty" to some one.

Times have changed now from what they were then. The town and the country, by the various means of communication, have been brought so much closer together than they used to be that there is but little need any more for the pack-peddler.

Those who entertain strangers may sometimes "entertain angels unawares," but this is not always the case; for sometimes it may turn out that instead of an angel one is entertaining a "wolf in sheep's clothing."

Once an old negro came limping up to our gate leaning on a stick and asked to be taken in. My step-father and mother were both self-made doctors, a product from the necessity of the times, and the old darkey wanted to be treated for some ulcers that had broken out on his legs. Most likely they were the result of a life of immorality, but be that as it may, he had two bad sores, one on the inside of each leg, just above the ancle. He had them wrapped up with some very unsanitary wrappings, and when he took these off to show his afflictions there was a most offensive smell.

My father and mother consulted about the case to decide what would be best to do, and a woman's sympathies prevailed. The old African promised that when he got well enough to work he would split rails, clear land, build fences and

grub sprouts till we were entirely repaid. He was allowed to sleep before the fire in the kitchen on a pallet made down on the floor. This arrangement came near resulting in a very serious affair, for one night the quilts with which the old man covered himself, took fire and it had made considerable headway before waking him. He succeeded however in putting it out without raising an alarm and we knew nothing of it till the next morning, when he showed us the misfortune that had happened to him and made all sorts of apologies.

The old man's afflicted parts soon began to yield to treatment and it was not long till he showed marked improvement. His appetite got to be exceptionally good; the amount of cornbread, bacon and cabbage, together with a proportionate amount of milk, butter and molasses, that he could consume at a meal was a wonder. Several weeks passed and the time had come when we felt that the old darkey should begin to fulfill his part of the agreement, a matter that he seemed to have entirely forgotten. One morning as we were starting off to the new-ground, Gooch called out to the old man, "Come on Uncle Ike and let's go to work." He was sitting in the kitchen by the fire as usual and replied to my brother saying, "What's dat sah?" "Come on and let's go to

work." "No dat I aint" was his emphatic reply, and he didn't either. It began to be a plain case that we had an elephant on our hands and that the work so faithfully promised would never be given. Our mother felt that her boys had to work hard to make a living and that they should not be made to support a worthless old negro that showed such little gratitude. In a few days, receiving his orders, he walked away, having been told that he could not be kept any longer, and that was the last we ever saw of him.

It was a cold winter night and the hour between supper and bedtime. The wind moaned around the corner of the house outside and went wu-u-u! wu-u-u!! wu-u-u!!! We were all sitting around a bright fire that roared and crackled in the broad old fireplace. Now and then a live coal would pop out on the carpet when there would be a general scuffle to brush it back on the hearth before it burnt a hole. The green sticks, as they heated up in the middle, sputtered and steamed at the ends. Some of the smaller ones had already burnt in two at the middle and dropped down into a bed of glowing coals. On top the blaze was reaching up into the throat of the chimney. Old Watch, the dog, lay in one corner. Once he began to jerk his feet and try to bark. His barking was in a sort of grunting

undertone for he was asleep. "Look at Old Watch," said one, "he's dreaming." "I guess he thinks he is after a rabbit now," said another. The conversation drifted from one thing to another according to whatever chanced to come up. Sometimes it was a criticism of a neighbor. The next moment it would be about the weather. "Just listen at that wind; it's a going to be cold to-night." "You reckon [1] them potatoes will freeze down in the cellar?" "Children are all the stock put up?" "Do you suppose a dog has a soul?" Old Watch dreams just like a person." "[2]Who did you see over at Shady to-day?"

In the midst of this medley of a conversation there was heard a call at the gate—"Hallow!" "Hush, somebody said Hallow." "Hallow!" "Somebody's at the gate," "I wonder who it can be?" "I do hope no one is coming for me this cold night," said my mother, for in those days she attended the neighbor women in maternity cases instead of a doctor. A rush was made for the door by two or three at the same time. Alt stepped out on the piazza and called out, "Hallow, who's out there?"

The rest of the family stood breathless inside to hear the reply.

"I am a stranger traveling through the neigh-

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1 Those 2 Whom

borhood and would like to get to stay all night." Our parents looked at each other. "We can't take anybody in here to-night," muttered my step father. "But it is too cold to turn a poor man off to-night. Tell him to come in Alton B," rejoined my mother. "Come in !." "Watch ! Hush up sir. Come on, he won't bite you." "Take the light to the door so the man can see how to get in," said my mother. A man with his hat down over his face and a great overcoat on and a heavy comforter about his neck approached the front steps. Everyone was in suspense and wondered who it could be. Some were a little afraid and drew back. The man walked boldly up on the porch and in at the front door. Then he began to take off his big comforter and when his face could be seen my mother nudged "Mr. Puckett" and said, "It's Jim." The spell was broken. Jim was the oldest son of my step-father whom he had not seen for many years. His home was in Mayfield, Kentucky. He had come to make us a visit and had purposely concealed his identity to give us a surprise. Soon we were all seated around the fire again listening to his stories and news, while mother was out in the kitchen preparing him

some supper. It was a late hour before anyone went to bed that night.

Let not thy hand forget to lend
Assistance to whom God may send;
Then when the stranger's path you tread,
You too may be received and fed.

STORY TWELVE

GOING TO MILL

One morning the horses were caught, blankets were spread on their backs and a bag of corn was laid across on each blanket. It was summer time. We were getting ready to go to mill. Only two of us were going. Alt (Alton), an older brother and myself. A sack of corn or wheat carried across a horse's back like this was called a "turn." We got upon the sacks of grain and started. It was my first trip to mill for I was only a small boy. I was not accustomed to sitting on a turn and it was all I could do to keep it balanced and stay on. I was put on Old Bet, the gray mare, because she was gentle and too lazy to get scared. When she went faster than a stiff, jogging walk she trotted. When she trotted she went a little faster, but jogged more than when she walked. By holding the reins up pretty tight and switching her in the flanks she could be urged into a pace which was a very good gait so long as she could be made to keep it. But this was too much exertion for her lazy feelings and at every little crook in the road, rise, descent or rough place, she would break her

gait and settle down again to the same old jogging walk. Between keeping up with my brother and keeping my balance on the turn I was kept anxiously busy and it was not long till I began to grow tired of the journey. And, to add to my troubles, the turn would keep working back till I would be on the rear end of Old Bet with my turn trying to work out from under me.

It was eight miles to the mill and, under the circumstances, it seemed to be a distance much longer. Our way led across the hills and through an almost unbroken forest called the "barrens." Finally we came to the top of a long hill. At the foot of the hill lived Mr. Crawford. In going down this long hill I had a new trouble in reverse order for my turn, instead of slipping back as it was so inclined to do at other times, now began to work forward and I was afraid I would slip off, turn and all, right over the old mare's head. My brother called back to me and said to make her hold her head up and I would be all right. Descending a small stream of glittering clear water about a mile we came to the mill near its mouth on Swan Creek. It was called "Stanfill's mill," though at that time it was kept by an old man named Andrew Wiley. In order that the house might be above high-water mark it was built on large posts about ten feet high. I had never seen a

house on posts like that before and it all seemed very strange.

When we first rode up Mr. Wiley, with his [1] slouch hat all covered with meal, came walking down the long plank incline to take our turns off. He was rather an old man, broad-shouldered and stooped. The first thing we wanted to know was if we could get our grinding that day in time to get back home by night, for sometimes when too many people came on the same day, some would have to leave their grain and go back for it a day or two later. Being assured that we could be accommodated we slid off to the ground and my brother went around on the opposite side of the horse to push the turn off on the old man's shoulder. When he had carried this in, he came back for mine. We then hitched our horses and went in. I had never been in a mill before and everything was new and interesting. Thick planks were nailed to the heavy posts on which the mill stood and formed one side of the mill-dam. The mill-pond was hard by the house so that one could stand in the door and look right down into the deep, clear water and see the fish swimming lazily around. While waiting for their grinding the mill-boys would sometimes engage in fishing. The miller nearly

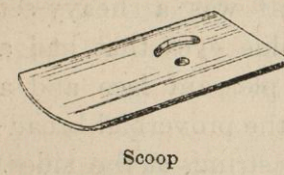
1 An old hat with a broad brim which dropped down.

always had some fishing poles out. The water rushed through a flume against a wheel that turned a perpendicular shaft which reached up into the mill-house and turned the mill-stones. One was for grinding corn and the other wheat. Only one could be run at a time. The pondrous stone—about four feet across—did not turn quite on its center which made one side a little heavier than the other, and every time it would go round the whole house would shake. I could not help feeling that the old building might fall, but the miller did not seem to be afraid and I finally got used to it. The wheat when ground was run through a bolting cloth that turned in a long chest. The flour came out all along and poured into a long box ten or twelve feet long. At one end of the box was a space of about two feet where the shorts came out. The bran poured out at the end of the long chest and was caught in a sack.

The miller used two measures, a [1] half-a-bushel, and a [2] peck measure. With the half-a-bushel he measured the corn and poured it up into the hopper. When all was in he took the peck measure and took out one-eighth as toll. This was the customary charge for grinding. The meal came out all round the edge of the millstones,

1 A little more than one *to* 2 About *go sho*

but by means of a circular box that encased them it was made to pour out in a spout. From the spout the meal poured into an oblong box on the edge of which were some little hooks on which to hang the mouth of the sack while the miller held to one side with his hand and shoveled in the meal with the other. The shovel or scoop consisted of a board about a foot wide and a foot and a half long, and with two holes in it, a long one to accommodate the hand and a round one for the thumb. It was interesting to watch the mill-stone go flying around while the corn poured out in a little stream from the hopper above, and the meal rushed down the spout into the box.


Scoop

As this was my first mill to see I naturally supposed all others were like it. But it was not so long however till I was sent again to one of the mills on Leatherwood Creek, and for the first time I saw an over-shot water wheel. It was the largest wheel of any kind I had ever seen being about twenty feet high. The rim was about three feet broad and had "buckets" all around into which the water poured as it came rushing out from the race above. As the big wheel went round the buckets were filled on the top side of it and emptied at the bottom. A mill wheel thus arranged is called an

"over-shot" wheel because the water is let into it from the top. The weight of the water, being all on one side, turned the wheel, which was connected with the machinery inside the building that turned the mill. At that time there were no less than six mills on this one stream. This one was owned and tended by Pink Puckett. One of his sons now owns it. Pink Puckett was a heavy-set broad-shouldered man with blue eyes that had a kindly twinkle in them, a pleasant face and a genial disposition. He wore the proverbial broad-brimmed hat, tacked up with strings at the sides. His trousers were loose and roomy and his suspenders long. He usually went without coat or vest and with his shirt collar open. I never heard him swear, but he had a habit of saying [1] *shore-poppy* by way of giving emphasis to what he said.

Some time after this first trip, just how long I cannot say, it may have been a year or two or even more. My Brother Alt and I went to mill again. This time we took the wagon and several sacks of grain, both corn and wheat. The distance was six miles. Pink Puckett's uncle had married our mother by which a sort of marriage kinship had been established. He was very kind

1 This is not a dictionary word. I never heard it used by anyone else. It is called a *byword*.

to us when we would go to his mill, and would sometimes ask us to go and take dinner with him. We usually declined, for a miller or a merchant cannot afford to entertain all his customers. On this particular occasion he took Alt and myself down in the basement of the mill where the wooden [1] cogwheels were creaking and turning in various directions. Reaching up into a secret nook he took down a quart bottle of whiskey only partly full, and, before taking a drink himself, offered one to us. We didn't know any better than to take it. All drank from the bottle by [2] turning it up to our mouths. I drank perhaps as much as a spoonful. I was not accustomed to it and it was not long till I began to feel dizzy, for as people commonly say, it had gone to my head. We were soon on our way home, and by the time we had reached the river which was about half way, it was hard for me to see straight, in fact I could not see very well in any direction. We had the sacks piled up one on another and were riding on them. My brother cautioned me to sit closer up to him or I might fall off in the river as we crossed. Even when we reached home I still felt its effects. My other brothers who came out to help carry in the [3] grinding laughed at me. Next morning when its effects had gone I felt very

1 Ha-guruma. 2 Rappa nomi. 3 Bags of meal and flour.

much ashamed. I have never been under the influence of the stuff since. In those days people did not look upon drinking as being so bad as it is known to be now. I am exceedingly glad I stopped in time before the drink habit got a hold on me.

About thirty years later I was passing the same place on Swan Creek where the old mill once stood. All traces of it had gone, save some of the old posts on which it stood that were still to be seen in the midst of a thick grove of young sycamore trees that had grown to be forty or fifty feet high, and the distant past, when, as a mill-boy I made my first trip there, seemed like a dream.

STORY THIRTEEN

FRIENDS OF THE FOREST

There is something especially attractive about a big tree. It is a friend to the weary traveler, to the pleasure seeker, to the grazing herds at noonday and to the birds of the air in their flight. And then again a great tree impresses one with the feeling of majesty and grandeur.

One of the pleasing memories of my childhood days is the memory of the big trees that stood on the farm. Most of these have disappeared now and all that remains of them is an old stump here and there, and in many cases not even this much is left but all trace of them is entirely gone save that which memory retains. As I don't wish my old friends to be wholly forgotten I will give a sketch of at least two or three of them.

Near the spring beneath the hill was a great old sycamore, that was once itself only a child of a still older parent which had grown up, flourished and fell leaving nothing but a broken stump on which was a sprout. This soon grew to be a sapling, then finally into a tall tree towering

toward the sky. But the traces of the parent stump around which the young tree had grown were still in evidence, for though the old stump had completely rotted away, it had left a large hollow at the foot of its successor with all one side open. This was a favorite place for the hogs to sleep in cold weather; but, though more comfortable to them than sleeping out in the open, it was bad for their health as they would breathe the dust and contract a cough, would fall off in flesh and sometimes die. We usually kept it filled with "rocks."

The branches of the sycamore tree are inclined to be pendant like the willow making it a favorite tree for the oriole to hang her nest in. I remember especially one branch on this tree that hung down perpendicularly about twenty feet, and to which the [1] oriole attached her nest from year to year. When the wind would blow it would swing back and forth with the nest of sleeping birds.

Another well-known tree on the farm was a [2] mulberrry tree that stood alone in the field back of the house. For a mulberry tree, it was remarkably large being about two and a half feet in diameter and covering with its spreading top a space forty or fifty feet across. It was not so far

1 A much-prized American bird 2 Kuwa

from the woods on the south. But it stood out in the field alone and cast its friendly shade both for man and beast. It usually bore a large crop of berries which were of a very excellent quality, for the tree stood out fair to the sun and also the ground around it was cultivated; this added both to the excellence and quantity of the fruit. The spring path from the house to the cold spring, commonly called the "Little Spring," which was just in the edge of the woods beyond it, passed right under the great old mulberry tree, and often when the berries were ripe, we would gather them, wash them in the cold spring and then pin some large leaves together in which to carry them to the house.

During the mulberry season, which came on about the middle of July, both birds and animals fed on them. The pigs, when the field was in pasture, would seek the dropping fruit and would lie under the tree waiting for the berries to fall. [1]Peckerwoods with their bright red heads and white striped wings made frequent visits to this tree and could be seen flitting in and out at almost any time of the day and always carrying away with them a berry in their bills. Squirrels also were constant visitors, and many a time, while the plow-horses w re finishing their noon meal have we

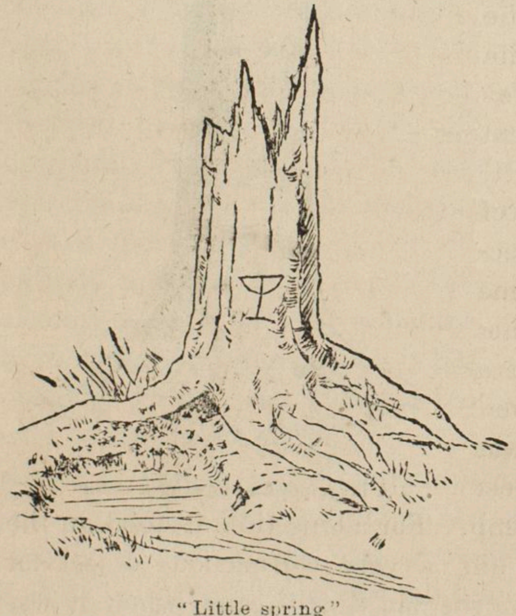
1 More commonly, *woodpeckers*

slipped out through the corn with the gun to find one or two of these cunning little animals up in the great tree feasting on the luscious fruit. Usually his where-abouts could be discovered by the shaking of the branches where he had climbed far out in search of the berries. At a crack of the gun down he would come with a [1] *thud* to the ground. At this season of the year when food was plentiful he was sure to be fat and in good condition for eating, and the chances were that when supper time came the little animal, having been dressed and cut into several pieces, would be fried a tempting brown and placed on a dish in the center of the table accompanied by a bowl of white gravey made from the grease in which it had been fried. Such a dish, with hot biscuits, to a hungry country boy was all that could be desired.

I wish that I might some day find myself beneath the shade of that friendly old tree again and see the peckerwoods flit in and out among its green leaves and hear the rustling of the little squirrels among its branches. But one day Merriman who was cultivating the field that year, and to whose lot that portion of the farm had fallen said. "Why cumbereth it the ground?" Its fate was sealed. Perhaps not a trace of it can

1 Dŏt!

now be found. Even the deep forest that approached so near it, with giant oak, ash, beech and sugartrees, has now all disappeared and the land is in cultivation. One great old beech in particular stood right over the spring and from beneath whose roots the clear water came bubbling out. On it was carved by the writer when a very small boy a meaningless design like this Ŧ. A great storm shattered the tree leaving only a splintered stump on which was the meaningless design still. But the splintered stump with its meaningless design has now completely disappeared with no indication whatever that a great giant of the forest ever stood there.

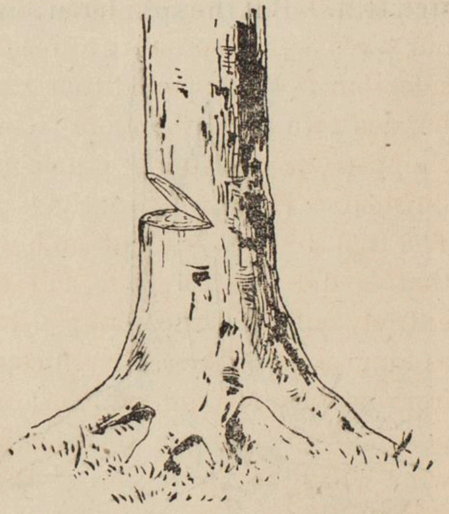


"Little spring"

On my last visit to the spot the spring was concealed by a clump of tall ragweeds that had grown up

around it. The bank above, once protected by the roots of the beech tree, had all been broken down and the spring was only a lazy puddle with hog wallows along its weak little stream among the weeds.

On the brink of the hill to the east of the house there stood a noted poplar, noted for being so tall, so large and so straight. It must have been seventy-five feet to the first limb and not a blemish or a knot could be seen. The branches then spread out on all sides somewhat uniformly, and this great giant of the forest, all the other trees having been cut from around it, was an object of sublime attraction. Even some of its branches were as large as a common-sized tree. It was about five feet across the stump. For a long time it stood on the point of the hill, a very conspicuous object far and near, but the day finally came when it was wanted. The house needed a new roof. It still

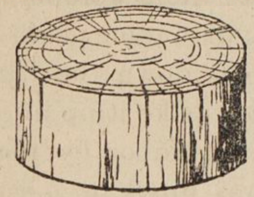


A large poplar showing a notch

retained the first [1]shingles with which it had been covered some twenty years before; these were now worn very thin and leaks had begun in some places. It was decided that we would cut down the big poplar on the brink of the hill and make it up into shingles for the new roof. A neighbor by the name of George Holderfield was hired to assist and he and myself cut down this noted poplar tree. First we cut a great notch on the east side for it was in this direction that we wanted the tree to fall. It was so large that the handles of our axes were too short to reach across to the far side; but it so happened that Holderfield was left-handed; we stood therefore facing each other and chopped in the same notch till one side was finished. Then we did the same to the other. The tree stood so straight and was so well poised that it did not begin to fall till it was almost entirely cut off at the stump. It seemed to linger as long as possible as if reluctant to come down from its lofty position which it had held so long, possibly for two or three centuries. A slight wind which began to blow at the critical moment started it, and, to our disappointment, blew it in the opposite direction from which we wanted it to fall. It came down with a tremendous crash, and fell with such force that the branches literally

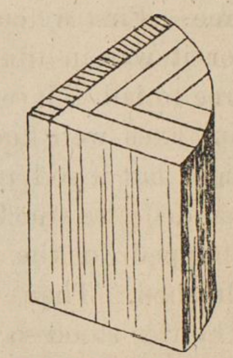
1 Yane-ita

whistled through the air. When it struck the ground the top, which means all that part of the tree above where the branches begin, broke into a thousand pieces, many of which were short enough for the fireplace without further cutting.



Block

The hillside where the great tree fell was very steep and the ground quite loose, and it first imbedded itself in the soil a foot or two deep, then bounced down the hill about thirty feet. Though the hillside was in cultivation the print of this tree remained there for several years afterwards not being obliterated by the plow.

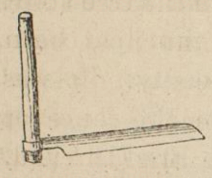


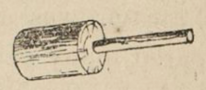
Quarter-block showing how the shingles were split

The next task was to saw this monster up into shingle lengths, eighsteen inches long. The blocks were first quartered then teen inches the house to be riven, then drawn or shaved into shingles. The riving was done with a frow and mallet. The boards, which were about four inches wide and an inch thick, were drawn smooth with a

Dr.wing knife

drawing-knife. When finished the shingles were three-quarters of an inch thick at one end and brought to a feather edge at the other. About one-third of the shingles, when put on the roof were allowed to show, the thin end went under the lap and the thick end was exposed.


Frow


Mallet

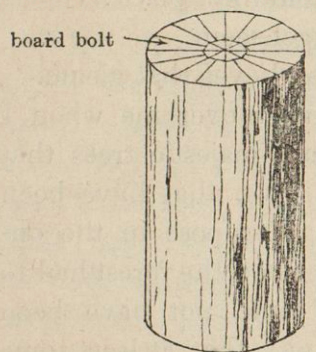
An old negro by the name of Bill English who was well known as an expert sh ngle maker, was employed to draw the shingles. He was a very industrious old darkey and from over-exertion, his windpipe had been injured so that his breathing was very loud and laborious, making one, not accustomed to him, feel that he was quite fatigued and out of breath, when with him it was only the ordinary.

Perhaps now there is not so much even as the stump of that magnificent tree and the shingles made from it to cover the home have again been worn out by the storms of many winters and given place to another new roof. I never stuck an ax into one of these great giants of the forest without having a certain sentiment akin to compassion and a feeling that somehow it ought not to be done.

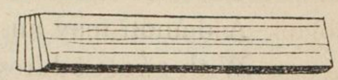
Up the smaller of the two streams running through the farm, Cave Branch by name, because of its source being a large spring that flowed out of a cave, was another noted tree that had been spared many years because of its beauty. It was a black-oak and stood just outside the fence at the end of a small field, called the Brickle Field. Brickle was the name of a man who once lived in a cabin in one corner of the field so it took his name. His real name was Brinkle, William Brinkle, but we and the neighbors always called him "Bill Brickle." The tree in question was supposed to be an excellent board tree, but it was such a beauty, for a long time we passed it by. It was about three feet through, a good size for boards, clear of all knots and blemishes of any kind and with a long body as straight as if it had grown up by rule. We were in need of boards to cover the kitchen and [1] smoke-house and some one suggested that the "pretty oak" was no count standing there and why not cut it. My two brothers, Gooch and Alt cut it down but with a feeling of some regret. First they laid some large poles along at intervals where the tree was to fall to prevent its sinking into the ground. When down they then measured it off into lengths thirty inches, or two and a half feet long. Next

1 Meat-house

they sawed it up into cuts. The first being the *but cut* was not suitable for boards, but it made good fire wood. They were so sure of the excellent quality of the tree for boards that they did



Board cut showing how boards were split



Board bolt

not even test the first cut before sawing up the rest of the tree, but went on till they had cut the entire tree into board lengths. This required a day or two. Then turning a cut up on end, with maul and wedge, they began to split it up into bolts; but to their great disappointment, it was exceedingly tough and could hardly be split at all. As they had already sawed it up they hated to lose their labor or they would have abandoned it for better timber. They thought of course it would "split like an acorn" as the common saying went, but it was coarse grained and hung together with many tough splinters. The boards it made were of an inferior grade.

I have often in my experiences with people,

thought of this tree, for it is not every person who has a beautiful exterior that is of fine quality inwardly.

> In outward form and pleasing grace
> Untested trust we should not place:
> A demon may an angel seem
> With sweet address and eyes that gleam.

A feeling of sadness comes over me when I think of the many great and majestic trees that once I knew and grew to love, that have been cut down and destroyed. I suppose in the onward march of civilization, when the forest had to give way to the field, it could not have been otherwise. But it seems a pity that at least some of these grand specimens of former years had not been preserved to coming generations.

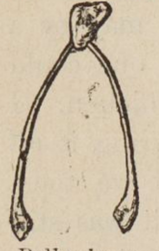
STORY FOURTEEN

HOUSE BOY

Mother's girls were all boys. There were six, and I was the youngest. As there were more hands to work in the field than to help with the house duties, I was turned into a house-boy. Sometimes they called me a girl, but of this I could never be convinced. My mother taught me to do all kinds of house work. I could make up the beds, sweep the house and cook a meal's vituals as skilfully almost as any woman. In addition to service indoors I had to bring water from the spring, milk the cows and dig the potatoes for dinner. Sometimes I gathered blackberries to make a pie, brought apples from the orchard to make green-apple dumplings, or gathered peaches to make a peach cobbler.

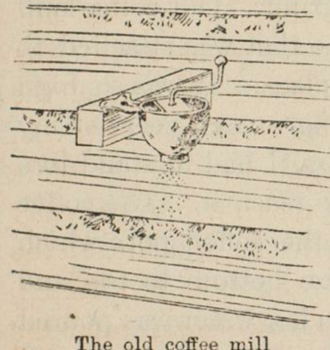
Whether it was really true or not may be a different question, but I thought no one could surpass me in dressing and frying a chicken. I could take its head in my hand and wring it off at a single jerk. We were told that we must never pick up a dying chicken while it was still kicking for if we did we could never learn to

write. I always carefully observed this restriction. Whether it held good with other fowls than chickens I cannot say for sure, but I think it did. As soon as it was thoroughly dead I would pour scalding water over it so as to loosen the feathers, and in two minutes afterwards I would have every feather off of it, even slipping the skin and claws from the legs and feet, for we always ate the feet of young chickens. The choice part of the chicken with some people was the feet. In cutting up the chicken I had been taught there was a certain way to do it, making just so many pieces when the work was done, the head, the neck, the two pieces of the back, the two thighs, the two drumsticks, and the two feet; then the two wings, sometimes cut into four parts when the chicken was large enough, and the breast, cut into three parts, one containing the pulley-bone. The pulley-bone is that forked bone that extends on either side of the craw. The gizzard and the liver were also saved, fried and served along with the rest of the chicken, making eighteen pieces in all.


Pulley-bone

The pulley-bone took its name from a superstitious practice common among the young people. Both boys and girls practised it, but mostly the girls. Two of them would take hold of either

prong of the bone and pull till it snapped. Whichever got the shorter piece was the one that would marry first. Each would then lay the bone up over the door. After this the first young man to enter would be her future husband. Sometimes an undesirable fellow would be seen coming, then there would be a scuffle and a rush to the door to take down the bone that he might not pass under it and thus seal her fate.



The old coffee mill

Most people in those days, however poor, thought they must have coffee, for once the habit is formed, like many other bad habits, it is hard to break off from it. And it is curious as well as amusing to see how many excuses people can find to justify an evil practice. The whisky drinker drinks in cold weather to keep him warm, in summer he drinks to keep cool, the slave to tobacco says he must use it to aid digestion, a doctor smokes cigars and cigarettes, because, he says, it wards off diseases, and the coffee drinker says he must have coffee to keep off the headache.

Coffee was served on our table regularly once

a day at the morning meal, or breakfast, and on special occasions three times a day. I knew how to make it from start to finish. We usually parched a cupful at a time in a common skillet. It had to be stirred constantly to keep it from burning at the bottom. When a rich brown but not black, it was ready to grind. Our coffee mill was a very old-fashioned one that was attached to the wall by the kitchen fireplace. It was so high up from the floor that, during several years of my apprenticeship as a house-boy, I had to stand in a chair or on a box in order to reach it. The coffee when ground was put into the coffee pot, which was a tin vessel tapering from bottom to top and with spout and handle; then hot water was poured in, and the pot was set on the stove to simmer till time to serve it. All the strength was not obtained at the first boiling, so we used also a boiler, a larger vessel of the same shape, in which to reboil the grounds. The water from the second boiling was used for making fresh coffee instead of clear water. Once when times were hard and money scarce on account of a drouth, we resorted to parched rye as a substitute for coffee, but it never became a favorite drink and was always used at a protest. It was especially disagreeable to my mother, for a woman's taste seems to be more refined and sensitive than a man's, and as

soon as she could save up a few dozen eggs she started one of us boys off to the village store to get some sure'nough coffee.

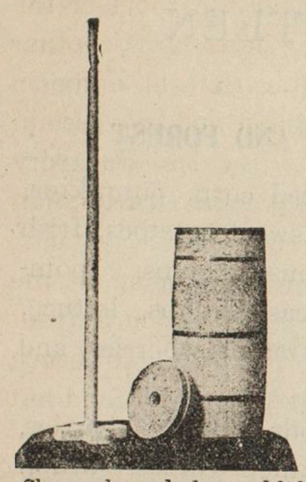
In setting the table, too, I knew just how to spread on the table-cloth, where to put the plates, on which side of the plate to put the knife and on which side the fork, where the spoons, bread-plates, napkins and center dishes should all be. Two things I specially hated and one was to wait and eat at the second table; and the other was to mind off the flies with a fly-brush while the others ate. It was certainly trying on a hungry boy's appetite to have it whetted still keener by having to stand by and watch the others eat with the smell of good things coming up to his nose. We never owned a flybrush made from a peacock's plumage since we never had any peacocks of our own and to buy such a brush was rather expensive. We usually broke a long branch from a peach tree, well set with leaves, or from a shade tree in the yard, for the purpose.

Those were days before factories were established and when wool and cotton were carded and spun into thread and woven into cloth all in the home. I have helped to make cotton cloth, "jeans" and coverlets. The cotton cloth was used for making shirts and other underwear; the jeans for making vests, coats and trousers. We

dyed it brown from the bark off the roots of the black walnut tree. The old loom my mother used is still sitting upstairs at the old home, a reminder of the days that are past and of a certain stage of American civilization which was very necessary at that time but to which the nation can never return.

In winter the churning was done at the house, but in summer, down at the spring in front of the spring-house under the large old beech trees. It was necessary to take a tea-kettle of hot water along and pour some into the milk before churning it, for if milk is too cold the butter will not "come" though one may churn ever so long. Our churn was the old-fashioned kind made from cedar and bound with brass hoops. The lid, stick and dasher were of ash. When the butter had come, it was gathered into a lump by turning the stick round and round holding the dasher up on the surface of the milk. Then it was taken up by means of a large spoon into a bowl. Sometimes our mother would use her hand in working the milk out of the butter. This was never allowed by anyone else, but mother's hands were always clean, and the butter and the biscuit tasted all the better for her hands having been in them.

Forty years came and went. The trees above



Churn, churn-dasher and lid

it decayed and fell, and the old spring was filled up and disappeared. The house-boy grew to manhood, and, after a term of years in preparation, went to the Far East across the sea. Often his mind, however, would go back to the old spring beneath the beech trees and to the churn and the butter and the butter-milk. There were cows and milk in the Far East, but when he would ask for butter-milk, none could be had. Sweet milk could be had, but butter-milk he craved. Finally he said, "I can make it myself and I will, or at least I shall try." He ordered the cooper to make a churn of cedar with brass hoops, a stick with a dasher attached to one end and with a lid and all. He went to the milk-man and bought fresh milk direct and set it away to turn. On the third day he churned and made sure 'nough butter and genuine butter-milk that tasted just like that made down at the spring in front of the old spring-house beneath the beech trees. Again he is a house-boy and is happy.

STORY FIFTEEN

FRUITS OF THE FARM AND FOREST

On the farm we produced corn, pumpkins, wheat, rye, oats, and millet; sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, water-melons, musk-melons, pomgranates, squash, beans, peas, onions, lettuce, cabbage, turnips, radishes, okra, strawberries, and grapes.

In the old fields and woods grew blackberries, dewberries, raspberries, summer grapes, winter grapes, persimmons, pau-paus, May-apples, crab-apples and black-haws; chestnuts, acorns, beech-nuts, walnuts, hazelnuts and hickorynuts.

Near the house in the corner of the field stood a large walnut tree that bore an abundant crop of walnuts. Its trunk was about two feet and a half through. While comparatively small the rest of the forest had been cut from around it so that the branches spread out far and wide in all directions. When the first big frost came the leaves would drop leaving the walnuts hanging thick on the branches, but ready to drop at the slightest touch. It was great fun to go out with sticks about two feet long and throw up into the tree as nearly at the top as possible and start a

few to falling which as they fell would strike others till, by the time they reached the ground, there would be a bushel that all came down at once. We hulled them so they would dry and put them away to eat in the winter.

It was every boy's delight when the autumn days came on and there was a tint on the leaves to go out into the deep woods in search of berries, nuts and wild fruits. Huckleberry hunting came on a little earlier. We usually made up a party and spent most of the day, for the places where they were found were several miles from home. Sometimes we got more seedticks and chiggers (chigoes) than berries which gave us abundance of employment for several days at odd moments scratching the itchy places.

Up back of the house almost half a mile away in an old field that was no longer cultivated, but which was used only for a pasture, stood the old grape-t ee. We called it the grape-tree because of the grape vine that hung upon it, but the tree was a common black oak. The vine and the tree had both started in life about the same time and had grown up together. The oak had not grown straight and tall as oaks are accustomed to do, but, owing to the encumbrance of the vine, it had been arrested in its upward march and its branches spread out only a few feet above the ground

while the main trunk had disappeared altogether. The vine was an unusually large one being six or eight inches through and its branches almost completely overspread the top of the oak. When the leaves came out in the spring the weight sometimes became so great that the bending boughs would come down within reach of the cows and were devoured, for it is the nature of cattle to eat the leaves and tender twigs of almost any plant or tree.

But notwithstanding the enemies that assailed it this great old grape vine produced an abundance of grapes every year, and as it stood out in the old field fair to the sun the fruit was unusually large and of excellent quality. Often we would take some meal sacks or possibly a sheet and go up there and fill them with grapes which we carried home and put up in jars. We preserved them by filling the jars with molasses. Though this was many years ago, I still retain their taste, if not in my tongue yet in my mind.

Finally when the boys grew to be men and some of them married and begin to establish homes of their own, the old farm was divided up into smaller ones. As there was not so much land to lie idle any more, the old field, in which had stood the grape tree for so many years, was cleared of the briers and bushes that had grown

up in it and again cultivated. "Why cumbereth it the ground" said the farmer and both the tree and the vine that hung upon it were cut down and piled up in one great heap and soon disappeared in the flames. Whenever I think of the old grape tree, the old mulberry tree and the old walnut tree, all of which had to yield their places, so long held and so well used, for corn and grain a feeling of sadness creeps over me and I almost mourn for them as for the loss of old friends.

There was also a famous persimmon tree on the old farm. It stood in an adjoining field to the one where the grape tree was and was in sight. It also stood out in the field all alone and was a conspicuous object. Tradition said it was left there because of its excellent fruit. Be this as it may, the persimmons on this tree were superior to those on other trees, being much sweeter. In Japan the persimmons are much larger than those in America. When the autumm days came on and the frost nipped the grass and tinged the leaves into crimson, brown and gold the persimmons began to lose their [1] puckery taste so that they could be eaten. When all the leaves had been stripped by the frost, it was beautiful sight to see the tall old persimmon tree as it stood aloft and alone with its pendant branches loaded

1 Shibui.

with the golden fruit.

A large stone lay also at the foot of this tree, weighing about twenty pounds or more, and tradition said again that our father during his lifetime used this great stone for knocking off the persimmons. He would take the great stone on his open up-turned hand holding it aloft just above his shoulder, and starting several paces from the tree, would run toward it and with might and main w uld hurl the heavy stone against the tree to jar down the fruit.

Old friends, good-bye; your day has passed,
You stood your ground until the last,
Your shade you lent to man and beast
And gave to all your bounteous feast.
If I could call you back once more
And place you where you were before
For one I would most gladly give
You standing ground on which to live.

STORY SIXTEEN

DOGS

On every farm there are various kinds of domestic animals such as dogs, horses and cattle.

Speaking of dogs, my uncle once owned a large yellow, and white-spotted dog named Heck. He was hardly grown till he got to be called "Old Heck," owing to his size and violent nature. He had a large mouth and long ears that hung down and a voice that could be heard a mile or even more. Hogs and cattle would sometimes break over Uncle Baz's fence and get into the cornfield for in some places this was not very hard to do as the fence was low and rotten. Then one could hear Uncle Baz as he rode out across the field calling Heck:—Here Heck, here; here Heck, here; here Heck, here! Then with yelping and barking Heck would start from the house for the field. If it were cattle he would not do much but run around them and bark and occasionally snap their heels or grab their tails, though I have known a dog to grab a grown cow in the nose, as it would throw its head down to drive the dog away, and, by throwing his weight in the opposite

direction, give the animal a complete summersault. Hogs were more easily managed than cows and if it were some neighbor's swine who happened to be trespassing on Uncle Baz's premises, in a few minutes you would be sure to hear one of them squeal with its ear or hind leg in Heck's big mouth and his long sharp teeth buried in his flesh, for he was not so particular where he caught them. That evening when his hogs would come home, one with his ear chewed into sausage meat and another with his ham torn and bleeding, a neighbor was sure to be angry at Bates. In such cases a law suit or a quarrel, or possibly both, would sometimes follow.

In the days of Old Heck we built a chimney to our house and we needed an iron support for the arch over the fireplace. The brick layer took the measure with a corn stalk and my mother went to the shop of Uncle Baz to get one. Wack, one of the boys was at work in the shop and had just taken a plow from the furnace and was hammering it on the anvil. Old Heck was also down at the shop, and when he saw my mother coming he made a dash for her barking furiously and showing his big red mouth. With her cornstalk measure my mother began to try to ward him off by striking the ground in much excite-

ment and at the same time crying out, You Heck! You Heck! You Heck! By this time the dog was almost ready to seize her clothing, but Wack ran out with his redhot plow still in the tongs and threw it at Heck and drove him off. The cornstalk arch measure was considerably broken up but by putting the pieces together they succeeded in getting the length of the iron for the chimney arch. When she came back home she told about it, and for a long time afterwards she would laugh and tell it to friends when they came.

Prudens Pugh whom we commonly called Granny Pugh, lived on the hill about half a mile to the north-west of our home. She had been left a widow by the death of her husband and was living with her daughters. There were no sons. Some of the girls were grown and the young men, according to our custom, would call on the young ladies and spend an afternoon or evening and engage in social conversation. One Sunday, which is the day usually chosen for such visits on account of its being a holiday, some young men had called on the young ladies as usual. Aunt Pugh as many people called her, went to the kitchen to prepare supper. She found there was no water and she took the bucket and started down the long hill back of the house to the spring to fetch

some. A "grass-lot" was on one side of the path. In the grass lot was her young calf. It was getting dusk so she could not see distinctly. The young calf jumped up out of the fence corner and ran off. Aunt Pugh thought it was a deer. She called out saying, "Run, boys, run, here goes a deer!" The young men came running out with the dogs and immediately gave chase. In a little while the dogs had caught the calf at the far side of the pasture and it began to [1]bawl. Aunt Pugh then remembered that it was her young calf instead of a deer, and she cried out again more excited than ever, "Run boys, run, the dogs will kill my calf!"

Dogs will sometimes take to killing sheep and once they form the habit it is almost impossible to break them from it. It seems to be the primitive wild dog nature that sometimes breaks out in the domesticated animal. One or two dogs will get into a sheep pasture and in one night will kill as many as a dozen sheep, for these inoffensive animals have no way of protecting themselves against sheep-killing dogs, and one dog can chase any number of sheep. When he catches one the whole flock will stop and look back till their companion is killed and their enemy is ready to give chase again.

1 Bel'ow, naku

Two puppies raised together are more apt to turn to killing sheep than if one is raised by itself. Many a dispute and some of them rather serious ones have come up between neighbors about dogs on the one hand and sheep on the other. It is almost sure to make the whole family angry if their dogs are accused of killing sheep. One proof of a sheep-killing dog is to look in the mouth, for if the dog has been guilty of such misdemeanor wool is apt to be found between the teeth.

Our father was once on the way to Uncle Baz Bate's shop to get the iron point of his barshare plow sharpened. The point of these old fashioned plows, that are no longer in use, had a very long bar attached. Between the shop and our home was a large woods lot used as a sheep pasture. While father was passing through this woods lot he saw a dog that had killed a sheep and was intently eating on it. He slipped up quietly behind him and, fetching a heavy blow with his barshare plow point, struck the dog on the head and crushed his skull. So thoroughly did the lick take effect that the dog did not even let go the sheep but sank down dead in his tracks.

Iron point of a barshare plow

One Sunday we two smaller boys, were left

at home to keep the house while the rest of the family went to prayer-meeting, as the meeting of the church to observe the Lord's supper was then called. Another reason for our staying at home was that we lived two miles from the church and considered it too far to walk and there were not enough horses, bridles and saddles for all of us to ride. Still another difficulty that sometimes came in the way of smaller boys going to church was that they did not have suitable clothes to wear. So we took it turn about, some staying at home one time and some at another.

It was a beautiful Sunday morning in the early part of summer. Not a cloud could be seen in the azure sky and not a breeze stirred the fresh green leaves, while a charm seemed to rest on all nature. When the family had gone to church and the stir of the morning was over it seemed so quiet that it made little boys, left at home to keep the house, feel rather lonely and that everybody had gone away off somewhere never to come back any more. This is the way we felt that calm Sunday morning. About ten o'clock, up the smaller of the two streams at the far end of the Brickle field somewhere, there was a strange cry that came down the hollow and broke the general silence. Just what it was we could not tell, but it sounded like the cry of an animal of

some sort, in distress. Finally my brother said, "I'm a going up the creek yonder and see what that is." When he reached the place he saw a dog that had caught a lamb and was eating on its hind leg while it was still alive. He drove the brute off, but the poor little sheep was so badly torn that it could not walk. He looked at its ears and knew from the mark that it belonged to cousin Myatt Mobley, whose home was on the hill not so very far away. It is the custom of farmers to mark their hogs, sheep and cattle by certain cuttings in the ears. I do not remember what Cousin Myatt's mark was, but our mark was a swallow-fork in the left ear and a split in the right. Some marked with a crop off of one ear and an underbit in the other, etc. He went and told Cousin Myatt, as we always called him, for no other reason than that his son married a cousin of ours. Cousin Myatt thanked him and they came back together to where the injured lamb was, and as it was wounded beyond recovery, he killed it, hung it up on the branch of a persimmon tree that stood near by, skinned and dressed it. One hind-quarter had to be thrown away. He cut off a fore quarter of what remained and gave it to my

Swallow-fork in the left and a split in the right

brother to bring home and the rest he carried to his own. When the family came back from meetin' we had a great story to tell them about the sheep-killin' dog that had caught one of Cousin Myatt's lambs. Cousin Myatt lived to be 92 years old, and I visited him and Aunt Suzan who was 84, for the last time, on my return from Japan in 1900.

Some of the dogs of our own home were Maje, Dash, Watch, Whelp and Dick. I can't tell much about Maje (Major) as it was too long ago for me to remember about him. Dash was a large black dog with a [1] bob tail about eight inches long. When a pup he got his tail mashed and it came off. Dash was a good-natured fellow but not very industrious or trustworthy. There is a remarkable similarity between the traits of character found in dogs and those in human beings. Dash loved fun and easy places and it gave him great delight for people to [2] make much over him. When there was anything to eat he was always present. He would hunt only when conditions were favorable and when we gave him plenty of encouragement. We never could be sure whether he had treed a 'coon or whether it was anything at all for he was as liable to find one where it was not as where it was; and whether he

1 Short 2 Praise him

was chasing a 'coon, a rabbit or the house cat we could never be sure, for though he seemed to feel that he must find something, he usually hit upon whatever came nearest and required the least exertion. Rabbits sit in the weeds and grass in the fields and may be hunted in the daytime, but 'coons and 'possums come out of their dens at night. Once we were out in the fields hunting rabbits. Gooch was [1] whooping up Dash, but Dash as usual was not very successful. Finally he struck a trail to the great delight of Gooch, and he cried out to the rest of us, "Now Old Dash is after one, I see his tail a bobbin' up and down in the weeds." But after all Dash didn't [2]jump any rabbit and the saying of Gooch became a joke.

Early one cold, frosty morning, Uncle Jarrett (Jared) Cotton, who lived about a mile and a half up the same stream above us, came on some business. Uncle Jarrett was brought up in the days when everything was made at home, for it was before the time of factories and factory-made goods. His farming implements, all his household furniture and furnishings, and every article of clothing the family wore, were home-made. Uncle Jarrett had a tanyard, a blacksmith's shop and a thrasher in the barn. To show how

1 Hagemasu 2 Find and cause to jump up

thoroughly they supplied everything at home I will relate an incident. In later years his son Wintfred became a village merchant, and Uncle Jarrett allowed the family to do some buying at his store. At the end of the year when his store account was made out he was alarmed to find it so much and one day when my brother, Merriman was visiting him he said, "How much do you suppose my store account was this year?" My brother replied by saying he didn't know, but he was expecting him to say $25 or $30. "Well sir," continued Uncle Jarrett, "it was a dollar and seventy-five cents."

On the morning he came to our home, Uncle Jarrett had on his coon-skin cap which he usually wore in the winter time. His head was just a little taller than the yard fence so that all that appeared above it was the coon-skin cap. Dash saw it and thought he had found a 'coon right at our door. He broke out to the fence with most violent barking and was trying to leap the fence when with great difficulty we scolded and drove him back.

Dick was a little black rat terrier. He was especially good after rats but he had been trained by a half hound to hunt 'coons and squirrels also. One peculiar thing about Dick was that he had a different bark, one for squirrels and one for 'coons

so that we could tell from the peculiar yelp he gave what he had treed. We could always depend on Dick.

Watch was a yellow and whitespotted dog, of medium size and was intelligent and trusty. Just as there are men whose word is as good as their bond, so with some dogs. If for instance we should return from the field and forget our coat and leave it out, Watch would stay by it till the next morning. Watch and Dick lived at the same time and both were fond of hunting. One night we went out "a coon hunt'n" with Watch and Dick and Whelp, a black dog, good for nothing especially but to go along and make a noise with his barking. On the hill side beyond the spring the dogs treed something. When we reached the place we found that they had treed in the hollow of a beech. The tree was open from the ground up as high as our heads, then it closed in, leaving a hollow in the center that went on up we did not know how far. The dogs were much excited and were gnawing at the tree, and barking ferociously. By poking a long stick up into the hollow we could feel something soft. We turned the stick round and round and got a twist on what-ever it was, but we could not pull it down. We examined the hair on the end of the stick, though, and found that was 'coon's hair.

"Take off your coat," said one, "and stuff up in the hole to keep him from coming out when the tree falls." Then with youthful energy and great animation we began chopping the tree down as much excited by this time as the dogs were. It was not many minutes till it began to crack. Then each one got a dog by the neck and, seeking a safe distance, held it to keep it from running under the falling tree and getting killed.

The next problem was to get the "varmunt" out of the hollow tree. Selecting a place six or eight feet from the but we cut a notch in to the hollow and there was the animal right under the edge of the ax. We could hear him growl when we punched him. Chopping the hole a little bigger being careful not to cut the 'coon, we let one of the dogs put his nose in. He seized the 'coon and drew her out, for it was an old mother coon, then there was a squall that sounded almost like a little child's cry. All three of the dogs were on her at the same time biting, pulling, growling and barking and all were in one great pile rolling down the hill. "Keep the hole stopped up," cried some body, "some more may be in there." A little higher up we chopped another hole and, sure 'nough, the dogs pulled out another. Then followed more squalling, growling and fighting. When this one was killed we opened the hole and the

dogs pulled out another. Then followed another big fight. Still a fourth was drawn out and we began to think the old tree was full of 'coons. But this was the last one and before the dogs got it killed they were getting almost tired out. At one time we thought the 'coon would out-do the dogs and get away. Merriman struck at its head with the ax handle, but instead of striking the coon he gave Watch, our best dog, a dreadful blow just above the eye. He gave a moan which showed he was seriously hurt but did not cease his fighting till the 'coon was dead. It is of interest to notice that the lowest one in the tree was the mother 'coon showing that in accordance with parental instinct she had sent all of her young up into the tree ahead of her before taking refuge herself.

We returned home in triumph with four 'coons and a big story to tell. "Bring the lamp out here," said Merriman, "and let's see how bad Watch is hurt. I struck him a pretty hard lick right over the eye." Sure 'nough, as we had feared his head was swollen and his right eye was as red as blood. He growled and would not let us touch him. We made him a good warm bed out of some s ddle blankets and waited till morning. Watch got well but he never saw any more out of his right eye.

On another occasion when we were passing through the woods lot on the hill the dogs treed something under the root of a chestnut tree that had been partly upturned by a storm. We dug a hole large enough for Dick, the small dog, to crawl in and directly he came struggling out backwards with a baby 'coon in his mouth no bigger than a small cat. The little animal cried so piteously and it sounded so much like a human baby we made the dogs let it alone and allowed it to crawl back under the root of the tree with its companions. We called the dogs away and left them promising ourselves that when they got grown we would not let them escape a second time. But as all 'coons are alike we never knew whether we ever had another chance at them or not.

STORY SEVENTEEN

HORSES

Dick was a young horse three years old when he was brought to our home. We bought him from William Beasley, the father of Crittenden and Bob. One of his hips had been knocked down. Just how it was done I do not remember. Such an accident sometimes happens by the horse passing through a door that is too narrow or too low so that the point of the hip strikes against the door and is knocked down. We speak of such a horse as being hipped or hipshot. Such a misfortune greatly injures the looks of a horse as it makes the point of one hip lower than the other, but it does not seriously injure his service. On account of being hipped, Dick made a little shorter step with that foot than the other. But a more serviceable horse would be hard to find. Wherever we put him, whether under the saddle, to the wagon or the plow we could always depend on Dick. Whenever there was a young animal, whether mule or horse, to be [1] broken in we always hitched it up by the side of Dick, and he

1 Trained to work

seemed to understand what was expected of him as well as we did.

But there is as much difference in the spirit of horses as in men. Some horses are born with high spirits, some with quick tempers, some are slow and lazy and others well disposed. Sally was one of the high-spirited sort. She too was yet young at the time we bought her, was a beautiful form and a bright deep bay. She would work under the harness if treated very gently and kindly, but at the slightest provocation — the dropping of a trace or some unusual rattle or if spoken to in a loud tone—she would fly into a passion and be all [1] on nettles in no time. She was a good walker, but had no other gaits. She could trot with some speed, but it was a rough jogging trot. We finally sold Old Sally, as she got to be called, to a man by the name of Hughs. He came and spent the night with us. We sat around the fire after supper and talked about the trade, and [2] amongst hands, told the man so much about Old Sally's good and bad qualities that he seemed puzzled to know whether any of it were true and was inclined to count it all as a joke.

Bob was one of those horses that didn't like to work. He was not of a bad nature but he had a natural dislike for the harness. We bought him

1 Nervous 2 Including what all said

of Jim Dockry to go with Dick, that the two together might make a team. But to the wagon he was balky and to the plow he was awkward and clumsy and his big feet would tramp down more corn than two common horses. Bob was a fine looking horse. He was well formed, was of a deep bay and had an arched neck. He seemed to be fond of his appearance and liked a crowd. He never seemed more happy than on a Sunday with a nice saddle and blanket on his back, a showy bridle and a well dressed rider, in the midst of a large crowd. Bob was then in his glory. But on Monday morning when he was put under the harness and he had to draw the wagon or the plow his whole manner underwent a change. If he could have expressed his feelings in human language it would have been something like this: "I was not made for this sort of work. I am too fine a looking horse to be put to such drudgery. This harness hurts and besides it will shave my hair and muss my mane."

Dick and Bob made the team when we wanted to use the wagon, but they were an unequal team. Bob was a little larger than Dick and perhaps had more strength, but he would never do his best. He liked easy places and could never be depended on at a hill, if the wagon was loaded. He would stop, paw the ground,

lean first to one side then the other, would throw his head over Dick's neck and sometimes get his foot over the wagon tongue. It was not a rare thing for Dick to pull him, load and all up the hill. I have observed also that among men there are many that don't love hard work, but they will put the burden on some one else whenever they can.

Once two of the boys went to Nashville with a load of produce. It was fifty miles to Nashville and it usually required four days to go and come. But this time the roads were muddy and it took six days to make the round trip. Bob as usual would [1] flicker at the hardest places, and Dick had to pull most of he load. When they got back Dick was all tired out. Mother went down the road to meet them and she was so sorry for poor Dick that she put her arms around his neek and wept.

I never knew Dick to lose his head but once. Merriman was plowing him and Bet, the gray mare, one spring in the field back of the house. He left them hitched to the plow, for he thought they were quite trustworthy, and went down the hill to the spring to get a drink. They stood quietly in their tracks till he came back. When he took up the line and spoke to them, Bet, who

1 Fail

seemed to be half asleep, took fright—perhaps it was a dream—and suddenly started to run. She never had done such a thing before. We always thought she was too lazy to run away and that Dick was too trusty to do it. But contrary to our expectations not only Bet showed that she could run away but she got Dick frightened too and they both started. Merriman threw his weight back against the line, but, being an old one, it snapped and away went Dick and Bet across the field with the plow jumping and flying and floundering behind them. Soon they kicked themselves free from the plow; at the end of the field they made a circle and came back toward the house as hard as two frightened horses could come. By this time also they had broken apart. Dick made straight for the big gate that opened toward the barn. It was slightly open but hung at the bottom and would not open any wider. Dick thrust his head through and tried to pass out, but could not push it open any further and there he was caught, wet with sweat and panting so loud that one could hear him several rods away. Even the beating of his heart could be plainly heard.

When the fright was over, he was the same faithful Old Dick he had ever been before. On reflection, that is if horses reflect, he may have

come to understand that it was a foolish and unnecessary thing and that the old gray mare had played a trick on him. Everydody was surprised at this runaway, for we did not believe it possible to get Dick into such a scrape, and as for Old Bet we thought she was too lazy to take fright.

Dick, however, had another runaway for which he was quite excusable. Near the house were some stables and a crib. They were built of round logs. The [1] bumble bees had made a nest in the hollow of one of the logs. The stable door being open Dick went in one day in search of provinder and in some way stirred up the bumble bees. Some of them got on his back. Dick lunged out at the door and went flying down the road to the barn as hard as his feet could clatter, kicking and switching his tail trying to get the stinging bees off his back. As he ran into another stable at the barn, the top of the door scrubbed off the bees, and Dick was free from his persecutors.

From hard work in hot weather, Dick would sometimes take the thumps. That is, with every beat of the heart one could see a jerking pulsation in his flanks. The remedy was a gallon or so of salt water and rest. Because he was always willing and ready I fear we imposed on Dick and made

1 Ana-bachi

him do more than was due.

One cold winter morning when Little Berry went to the barn to feed, poor Old Dick was standing in the stable with his nose resting on the bottom of the trough, and when corn was put in for him he would not eat. The faithful old horse had come to the end and was dying. A few hours later his body lay stretched and stiff below the barn, for Dick was dead. If there is a paradise for good horses in the next world, I am sure Dick will be among them.

STORY EIGHTEEN

CATS

There's a difference in a cat and a dog on its face,
A dog loves his master but a cat loves the place.

We had two large tomcats which we named Dick and Tom. Dick was gray and white spotted. Tom was yellow striped. In order that they might be made to stay at home we made eunuchs of them.

Dick and Tom grew to be unusually large and rats and mice dared not show themselves anywhere about the place. They would go also to the barn-loft and to the corn-crib and catch vermin that haunted there. Both were very gentle and would sit about the fire or curl up under the kitchen stove during the winter. When hungry and rats were scarce, they did not mind to jump up on the table or into the cupboard if the door chanced to be left open. They would help themselves to anything they chanced to find: seeming to think they had as much right to it as anybody. It was no uncommon thing to see one or the other of them bringing in a bird or a half-

grown rabbit.

Once Tom got into a very peculiar predicament that was by no means as amusing to him as it was to me who happened to see it. There was an opening in the kitchen loft where a plank had been removed, just above the cook-stove. Tom had been up in the loft in search of prey and in coming down jumped down on top of the stove which happened to have a fire in it and was hot. The minute Tom struck the stove he discovered that something was wrong beneath his feet and he tried to get them all up at once and for an instant seemed to be so startled that he could not jump off, so there he was on the hot stove jerking up his feet as fast as he could. Finally he had presence of mind enough to jump, and leaped off into the middle of the floor and shot out at the door no doubt feeling that a trick had been played on him.

Levie and her brother Robert came to our home. once to spend the night. At such times children usually feel like they must have some fun of some kind or other—grindy-bottom, blind fold, William-trimbletoe, old witch, hide and seek and the like. We had tried several games and then one of the boys brought in Old Dick, the big cat, and also an inflated bladder with a few grains of corn in it. The bladder had become dry and

the corn would rattle. We tied the bladder to Dick's tail and let him loose in the room. Dick was not accustomed to such an appendage to his tail and began to dart around the room in great fright. Levie discovered that one of the doors was open and ran to shut it. Just as she slammed the door Dick was going out and the door came to on the bladder and "busted" (burst) it. It sounded almost like a gun. Dick thought the Harpeys were after him sure 'nough. He vanished under the floor.

One day in the autumn of the year when the frost was about to come and nip the grass and leaves our mother was out minding the cows on the sweetpotato patch just in front of the house in the corner of the field. She wished them to eat off the vines before we dug the potatoes. I was then only three or four years old and had com plained of having a headache. "Go in the little room," she said, "and lie down on the bed a while." I took Dick, the cat, with me. It was not long till I had fallen asleep. Alt chanced to pass through the house at that time and hearing a strange sound, opened the door and looked in to see what was the matter. My breathing was very hard and unnatural. The big cat was sitting on my breast with his face toward mine. Alt brushed the cat off on the floor and tried to wake

me up, but could not. He ran to the front door and called mother. She hurried in and hastily took me up in her arms and found that I was very pale, limp and still unconscious. I continued to breathe in a hard and unnatural manner. What had happened to me they could not tell, but it was thought that the cat had something to do with it. It is said that a cat can suck away a child's breath. Whether a cat may actually do this or not, I am not sure. It may be that the weight of a large cat on a child's breast would finally press its breath out. At any rate, since then, I have never had much fondness for cats. It is not safe to allow them to remain in one's sleeping room over night, and especially should they not be allowed to be in the room where children sleep. They import disease and scatter vermin, and are not safe companions for children. It is not such a rare thing for a cat to turn fierce and sieze a sleeping child by the throat as it would a rat.

Poor Old Dick outlived his days of usefulness. He got too lazy to search for rats and rabbits. Mother had put out a hen and a brood of young chickens. This was too great a temptation for Dick. The young chickens were easy to catch. One day he grabbed one and ran off under the house with it. It was tender and nice and suited his taste exactly. It was not long till he

caught another. Then it became habit with him and the young chickens began to disappear faster and faster. Finally mother said, "Boys, you will have to kill that old cat, he's eating up all o' my little young chickens." Gooch and Little Berry took him out to the wood-pile, and laid his head across a log. One held him while the other took steady aim and came down with a lick of the ax and Dick's head dropped off by the log while his body at a single bound leaped up almost as high as one's head. It is said that a cat has nine lives, but if Dick ever had another we never heard about it.

Mr. Kelley lived at the Nat Weems place out on the ridge to the south of us. He had five boys, John, Tom, Simpson, Andy and Lloyd. One winter when the snow was on the ground, Andy set a dead-fall and sprinkled bran under it. He had a long string attached to the trigger. The snowbirds would go under the dead-fall to pick up the bran. Now and then Andy would jerk out the trigger and down would come the dead-fall on the little snow birds. He caught many in this way. Having dressed them he put them all on a string and swung them across the big open fire-place to roast. Several cats were kept on the place and among them one they called the "Big Kitten." Andy left his string of snowbirds

swinging across in front of the fire and went out for something. He came back just in time to see the "Big Kitten" seize the string of birds and run out at the other door and under the house. Andy tried hard to get them back, but in vain. In his rage he wreaked out vengeance against the cat saying. "If I git a hold o' that old cat I'll make her sup sorrows the balance of her days." But Andy didn't get a hold of her and the "Big Kitten" didn't sup sorrows but the birds.

And here ends my story about cats. When I think of the many perils to which we are exposed and how nearly I was brought to the end of a very brief life by one of these sly and crafty animals, it suggests the following lines:

O by what a slender string
To this uncertain life we cling
A jump, a fall, per-chance a fright
And we should ne'er have seen the light.

And even since we've breathed the air
We hold to life as by a hair
The little avenue for breath
With phlegm is clogged and instant death.

Or else by chance the little one,
That toddles round so full of fun
May tumble from the door too high
Upon the ground a corpse to lie.

To young or old it's just the same,
All are but worms and weak the frame,
Be high or low, be rich or poor
Each day we live at death's dark door.

But no it ne'er shall come to me,
This bugbear death that old folks see,
For I am young and strong and brave
And have no terror of the grave.

Alas poor boy quite brave, 'twas true
But knew not what an hour could do,
The tide went swift, the current deep
And he too lay where drown'd men sleep.

The things now seen we see no more,
But those we see not shall endure;
Keep then thy soul without a blot
And thou shalt live when thou art not.

STORY NINETEEN

THE APPLE ORCHARD

It was not an orchard in the strict sense, for many of the trees had died and there only remained a few straggling ones scattered here and there in the field. We had them all named, the June-apple tree, the Grandmother apple tree, the Horse-apple tree, the Georgia-horse-apple tree and the Winter-apple trees which were three in number. The field in which they stood was between the barn and the house. The June-apple tree was near the lane that led from the creek up to the house. The apples were the old-fashioned kind and were striped. As their name indicated they ripened in June and were a country boy's genuine delight. The branches grew thick on the trunk and extended down within a few feet of the ground. This made it easy to climb. In some places the branches were so thick that the apples as they ripened and fell would lodge among them. It was great fun to climb up and find them all red and mellow. Once I remember however we found more than red June apples, for the old June-apple tree was also a favorite place for birds

to build their nests. One day a snake, in search of young birds, had crawled up in the tree. My brother and I were having a great time getting apples, one of us being up in the tree while the other was down on the ground picking them up in his hat. All of a sudden the boy up in the tree came tumbling down to the ground. "What is the matter?" said the other. "I saw a big snake up there about a yard long. My, but I was scared!"

The Horse-apple tree was on the other side of the field near the barn. It was the largest of them all being about two feet in diameter. It forked out into three great branches which spread out over considerable area of ground. The apples it bore were large yellow apples. Sometimes however those fair to the sun would have red cheeks. I have seen the ground literally covered under this great tree after a rain and wind. They were good for cooking, drying or to eat just so.

The Georgia-horse apple tree was only a few rods away. Its apples were of medium size and striped. When thoroughly ripe they were good to eat, but if a little green they were so sour that no one but small boys and pigs could eat them.

The winter apples were good keepers and even when not gathered they would hang on the

tree long after frost had fallen. Until late in the season they were too hard to eat, but they made good cider. We built a cider press under one of them. It consisted of a long trough, in one end of which was a strong box with openings in it for the cider to escape through. The top of the box was open. The apples were first beaten up in the trough by means of a square-ended maul. The beaten apples were then put into the box. Flat boards were then laid on top. The beaten apples were then pressed down by means of a long lever. The cider thus made was a very pleasant drink. When it got too hard (sour) to drink it was allowed to turn into vinegar. Apple vinegar is said to be the best that is made.

After a few years the cider press became old and unfit for use. The long trough was hauled away and was used as a slop trough in which to slop the pigs. When I say "slop the pigs" I mean to feed them on slop which is the waste water from the kitchen where the dishes are washed. It contains scraps of meat and vegetables and is relished very much by pigs.

As for the old trees they have all disappeared long, long ago and not a trace of them is left. The farmer's plow now glides over the places where they once stood as uninterrupted as if a tree had never been there.

When the field was turned into a pasture the horses and cattle would eat off the branches as high up as they could reach so that every tree came down to a uniform height from the ground. One year the orchard field was put to wheat. After the wheat was cut and thrashed we turned in the hogs and horses as usual, to eat up the scattered grain and to feed on the late grass. On one of the lower branches of the largest winter-apple tree the hornets had built a nest that looked like a Japanese paper lantern. Its weight had bent the bough to which it was attached till it hung down not much higher than a man's head. At noon when the sun was hot the cows and horses would seek the shade of the apple trees. In switching the flies with their tails a cow or a horse would sometimes strike the hornets' nest. The disturbed insects would then swarm out and light on the back of the intruder and begin to sting. Then you would see the infuriated animal rush out from under the tree and go [1] tearing across the field as if mad.

Bill Rawson was out hunting one day with his double-barrel shotgun and in passing through the field he discovered the big hornet's nest. He cocked his gun, raised it to his shoulder, took aim and fired. The load of shot went through

1 Running furiously

the nest and tore a hole in it as big as a man's fist. That was the last of the hornets, though the remnant of the old nest hung there for a long time.

Oh but it was glorious in the spring when the woods were so green and resonant with the song of birds, when the apple trees were fragrant with bloom and the cat birds flitted in and out among their rich green leaves, when the martins had returned from the South with their gay song and the peach trees, too, were in bloom! Whenever I think of those happy days a thrill of joy fills my soul.

In addition to the trees in the orchard field there were others scattered about over the old place. A row of peach trees stood along the south side of the garden. Under them was the strawberry bed. The strawberries grew right up to the foot of the trees. Several others were scattered here and there around the house, most of which had come up voluntarily from seed that had been thrown out. In former time several log cabins had been built on the old farm, but had fallen into decay, or else had been torn down. Wherever a cabin had been there were sure to be seen remaining a few fruit trees that marked the spot.

There was a conspicuous p.ach tree that most

likely came up from a cast-away seed, which stood right at the corner of the woods at the edge of the field which lay "between the thickets" on the hill back of the house. Every spring its bright, pink blossoms looking so cheerful and gay, could be seen for a long distance. Back further still on the hill where once stood an old house, was a whole cluster of peach trees that shone out each spring with their happy faces and around which thousands of bees could be heard humming as they searched for honey. I have seen the glorious cherry blossoms in Japan, but according to my taste in flowers nothing surpasses a peach-orchard in full bloom. No better peaches ever grew than grew on those old trees. Many a sack, and bucketful have we carried down to the house to be cut and dried.

Down in the bottom west of the house and near the steep hill we used to slide down, was once a log cabin and as usual several fruit trees had grown up around it and among them a sweet-apple tree. It bore an abundance of medium-size yellow apples that contained no acid whatever and for this reason they were called "sweet apples." When ripe they were excellent in taste, though some people did not like them so well. As far back as I can remember I have been very fond of apples. Once when a barefooted lad I

went down to the sweet-apple tree on a hot summer day and brought back about a peck in a meal sack. I sat down flat on the floor out on the piazza with my back against the wall, nearest the end next to the garden and with my sack of apples within easy reach, ate till I was satisfied. And for a small boy I must confess that, as I now reflect on the incident, the number I ate was considerable, so many that my brothers turned it into a joke and told the neighbors that would drop in that "John Moody brought up as many apples from the sweet-apple tree as he could tote in a meal sack and sat down and ate the last one of them." Though the story was not strictly correct there was so much truth in it I could not say anything. For if I had tried to explain by telling just how many I really did eat the quantity would have been so great that they would have laughed at me more than ever, so I preferred to let it pass as a joke. Even as a lad I had learned that the best way to deal with a joke was never to deny it or attempt a serious explanation, but to take it all in good part. The boy who can't take a joke will often find himself in hot water.

Uncle Henry Cummins lived on the road toward the Leatherwood mills. He married a sister of Aunt Polly Puckett who was the wife of a son of our step-father. There was really no

1 Carry

kinship whatever between the two families, but anyhow we always called him "Uncle Henry." It may have been because everybody else did it. Maybe it was only out of respect for an old man. Another thing which may have made us feel like calling him "Uncle Henry" was that he owned one of the best farms in all the neighborhood and though not rich, was considered very well-to-do, and whenever a man is well-to-do it often happens that he finds many of the poorer sort who love to claim kin with him. Be this as it may, whatever cause may be assigned we always said, "Uncle Henry," and as I have said, he lived on the road toward the Leather-wood mills. I was sent to Uncle Henry's once for some sweet potato slips. This is only another word for *plants*. They are *slips* I suppose because they are slipped loose from the potato when pulled up out of the ground for transplanting. Uncle Henry had already transplanted all he wanted and still there were many more coming up on the bed, so he told us that we could have what we wanted. I was sent for them. The potato bed, commonly called a *hot* bed, was just inside the garden fence which was hard by the big road. A June-apple tree stood at the other end of the garden from the house just beyond the fence in the corner of the field. The apples were red and ripe. The tree

was hanging full of them and many were lying temptingly on the ground. I had seen them on my way. It was not the first time I had seen them. On my way to mill and on the way back again, many times had these red June apples tempted me. If they had not been so near the house, maybe I would have slipped in and taken some of them without asking. Maybe I would, for it was a great temptation to a boy. Again maybe I would not, for I never had done it to other people's apples that were further away from the house. I had always been taught not to. But one thing was certain, no boy ever wanted June apples any worse than I wanted some of them. Uncle Henry was squatting down by the potato bed pulling up the slips. I was standing on the outside in the big road leaning against the plank fence looking through the crack watching him. I don't remember why I didn't go in the garden with him. Maybe he thought I might tramp on something. Or my clothes may not have been very nice—possibly there was a hole in the knee of my trousers—and I didn't want to go in through the yard and around the house where some of the girls might see me. Polkie, the youngest, was just about my size, and I was awfully shy of girls. Whatever the reason may have been, I didn't go inside the garden, but was

standing and watching Uncle Henry from the road on the outside. The June-apple tree was in plain view. Why didn't Uncle Henry understand how much I wanted some of them and tell me to go and help myself? Maybe he *would* think of it. He kept bearing down on the bed with one hand to keep the potatoes from coming up, while pulling up the slips with the other. When he would get a handful, he would carefully place them in the basket. It looked like he was not going to think of the June apples at all. Should I ask him? I dreaded it, for maybe he didn't want me to have them and would say, No. Finally I determined to risk it—"May I have some of them June-apples that are on the ground?" "As many as you want," Uncle Henry said. I almost flew around there to the tree. I picked up June-apples faster than Uncle Henry pulled up potato slips. When I crawled up on the horse and he handed me my basket of slips, I also had both pockets stuffed with June-apples. I don't remember whether I had any in my bosom or not.

Speaking of this incident reminds me of another that happened at Uncle Henry's. It doesn't exactly come under the head of apples and apple orchards, but I will relate it any way. My mother visited Uncle Henry's home one day

and took me along with her. I rode behind her on the same horse. After dinner we went out to the same field where stood the old June-apple tree, for it was in the corner of that field that he had his watermelon patch that year. He always had the best melons of any body. Several grown men were in the crowd including his two sons. They thumped the melons to see if they were ripe, for a skilled person can tell by the sound whether a melon is ripe or not. One large round one I remember was thumped by several different ones of the company, but all said it was yet a little green. When they had selected four or five, Uncle Henry asked me if I wanted to carry one to the house. Of course I did. It was as big round as I was and almost as long. He put it up in my arms and I tugged it along till we got to the house. They laid them down on the porch. He turned to me and asked, "Shall I take yours?" I was puffing for breath and was almost tired enough to let it drop, so when he asked me if he should take it I very quickly said, "Yes." This tickled Uncle Henry very much, and he went around among the crowd telling them about it. But, my, those watermelons!

STORY TWENTY

FIRST TRIP TO NASHVILLE

Nashville is the capital city of the state of Tennessee. It is situated on the banks of the Cumberland River and is fifty-miles from where I was born. In the long ago it was the chief market for the farmer's produce, and in the autumn and wint r, trains of wagons from .the lower counties which lay to the west could be seen on the road to the "city," loaded with various kinds of farm products—corn, wheat, oats, peanuts, bacon, lard, hides, chickens, eggs, butter, etc, etc. It usually required four days to go and return. Forage for the team and rations for the men had to be provided.

When I was about ten years old, I became the owner of a pig. In course of time I traded it for two others. These grew to be large hogs. They were killed and salted down and made into bacon. When the time came to sell the bacon, since I was a share-holder, my mother and brothers allowed me to go along with the boys to Nashville. This was a great trip for me. I had never been so far from home, nor had ever seen a city.

Alton B., Merriman and I were the party from our home. Three of the neighbors also were going along. This made a train of four wagons. Each wagon had a cover to protect it from the rain. It consisted of a large sheet stretched over some bows. The direction was east and the road passed through the Cummins farm and across the river, then up Leatherwood Creek by the mills and out on the ridge, thence on to Nashville. The "Leatherwood hill" at the head of the creek was the one hill teamsters dreaded the most. Often they had to double-team to get up this hill.

When we were about half way, night came on and we drove out by the side of the road and camped in a wood. The trees were tall and thick. It was a stormy night and the wind was high, though it did not rain. The horses were unhitched from the wagons, unharnessed, and watered from a small stream near by and fed. Some of us gathered some dry wood and made a fire. We made some hot coffee and ate a cold supper. Then we sat around the fire and talked a while. Some of the talk was not fit for decent people to hear. By and by we began to get sleepy. A large beech tree stood near where we had built the fire. Between its roots was a good place for a camper's pall t. A— said, "I'm going to put my bed right thah (there) between the roots of

that tree." It was the choice place of all and some of us thought he ought to have been more generous toward the other members of the party and that he acted rather selfishly. That night I lay awake looking up at the tall, slender hickory trees as they moved in the wind and bent to and fro, while their naked branches, like the long arms of tall giants crossed and recrossed up in the dark sky. The wind moaned and it made one feel lonely.

Next morning we were up early and having finished breakfast were again on our way to Nashville. For several miles the country was sparcely settled, being hilly and poor. Most of it was yet in the woods. Now and then we would come to an old field that had once been cultivated but which was now abandoned. Further on we came to an old house some distance back from the road on the right. A— and B— told us to drive on and they would overtake us. They did not tell us what they were going out to the old house for. Some women lived there. We had a suspicion that their purpose was not a good one. We drove on for several hours before they caught up again. We came to where the roads forked and did not know which one to take. It so happened that we selected the right one. Finally we stopped for noon lunch and while we were

eating we saw A— and B— coming. They were all tired out as they had let us get too far ahead and had to walk much further than they expected. I remember while B— was eating, seeing the streaks of sweat that had run down his face to a point where he had wiped it off with his sleeve.

As we proceeded toward the city the country improved. Beautiful farms and neat homes lay on either side of the road. The road itself changed from a dirt road into a turn-pike. Nearer the city there were beautiful gates leading in to magnificent mansions ,with green, smooth lawns and pretty evergreen trees. I had never seen such splendor before. In the distance rose the smoke of the great city. It all seemed very awe-inspiring. In the edge of the city was a great gate of magnificence leading in to some imposing buildings, a school perhaps. I was riding in the wagon with C—. He stopped in front of the big gate and said. "John Moody this is Nashville, get out and open the gate." I had never seen a big city and was very green about the great outside world, but I knew enough not to believe Nashville was only a few houses inside of a gate. Failing in practicing his joke on me, he drove on.

Over to the left in an old field partly set in blue-grass and partly washed in gullies, they were putting up some large brick buildings. They

were covering the buildings with slate shingles. I saw a man walk right down to the very edge and begin to nail on the shingles. I felt afraid for him and wondered how he could work on the edge of such a high building and not fall off. I asked C— what they were putting up and he said it was Vanderbilt University. It seemed strange to me that they would build such a fine house in an old field with gullies in it.

We put up at a livery stable that night and slept on the hay in the loft. There was a little room near the entrance for guests. On the other side was the keeper's office. A round stove was in the center of the little room. In it they used coal instead of wood—"stone coal" it was called. I had never seen stone coal used for fuel before, and it seemed very strange to me that "rocks" would burn. But it made an awfully hot fire. Once it died down and we were getting cold. The old darkey came in and filled it up. The fire didn't burn though and we spoke to the keeper of the stable who ordered the old negro to see after it. He came in again, opened the stove door and looked in and said. "Dat's all right sah; don't punch it; all it needs is a little time."

After supper we went out to see some of the sights of the big city. On Capitol Hill was the State Capitol with its tall cupola towering up in

the dark sky. We then went to the suspension bridge across Cumberland River. Sometimes it was called a wire bridge. It was swung over the river by means of large wire ropes. We walked out on it. A breeze was blowing and the hanging bridge waved up and down. I felt afraid, for it seemed to me like it might fall. They told me there was no danger at all, but somehow I felt much safer when we got off of it and on to solid ground again. Horses were not allowed to trot across it, and they said a trotting dog would shake it worse than a horse.

Next the crowd started somewhere else. They didn't say exactly where they were going. It was not long till we were in a low part of the city where the street had been filled in, making it about ten feet higher than the houses on either side. The brick pavement changed into a plank walk. We came to some steps that led down to the entrance of one of the houses. There were six in the party, three brothers and three others. The oldest of the three others led the way and said. "Let's go in here." The other two followed. One of the three brothers asked. "Where are you going?" The leader said. "Come on." "We are not going in there," he replied. The three men went down the steps and knocked at the door. A woman came and

opened it. A bright light shone out from inside and we could plainly see the forms of the three men as they went in. The door closed behind them and all was dark again. It was cold and lonesome outside and the three brothers stood shivering on the plank walk. If they had only known the way back they would have made straight for the livery stable, but they didn't. They were puzzled to know just what to do. A scheme was being laid to get them inside the house. Again the door opened and the woman appeared and invited the boys to come in. They declined. "We don't want you boys standing out there," she said. "Tell them fellers (fellows) to come on then," rejoined the oldest of the three brothers. She did not say any more, but shut the door and in a little while the three men came out again. We all went back to the stable. I never think of that devil's trap but what I feel what a narrow escape we had. And again I never think of it without thanking my two brothers for their heroism in standing on their own defense and in protecting their younger brother from such a place of shame. I think I can say for my brothers what I can claim for myself and say we were never defiled with women.

The next day we were busy disposing of our produce, seeing the sights and in buying family

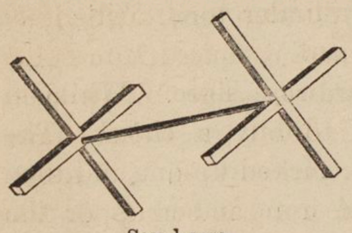
supplies. I had not yet learned that country people must not appear to see anything new in the city, but must act as though they had always been accustomed to such things. We were going along the street and I called to my brother saying, "Look at that man standing right on top of the house and pointing across the street." "That's not a man," he said in an under tone, "it's only a sign. Hush and come on."

We went into a hardware store. While in there a negro came in to buy a chisel. The merchant who was a Jew, picked up one and then stepped up to a piece of iron and chopped the edge of the chisel against the iron to show what fine steel it was. He then rubbed his finger along the edge to show it had not been gapped. The darkey stood by with a grin on his face. When the merchant offered it to him again he said, "I would [1] a' bought it but you've gone and dulled it now."

We were in a dry-goods store and A— was buying some thin goods to take home to his wife. A little boy, who was scarcely tall enough to reach over the counter, was waiting on him. Having measured off the goods he was trying to cut it with a very large pair of shears. For his little hands it was a difficult job and the points of the

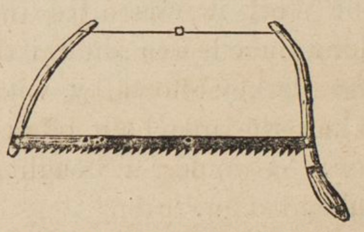
1 Have

scissors would hang in the goods. While he was performing this difficult task A— asked. "You are a little Jew, ain't you?" I shall never forget his answer; he said, "I'm a Christ-killer as sure as you're born." A— laughed one of his loud keen laughs and rubbed back his mustache and repeated. "A Christ-killer?"



Saw-horse

While at the livery stable, an old man came with his saw-horse and buck-saw to cut up some old beams of timber into kindling wood. His clothes were old and shabby and the buttons on the front of his trousers had worn through and were showing. His teeth were all gone and his step feeble. The stable-keeper remarked, "That old man is over eighty years old." Then turning to him he asked in a jocular way, "What kind of ashes will that make, uncle?" "Straight ashes," was his laconic reply.



Buck-saw

While sitting around that hot stove idlers of the city would drop in to get warm. There are

always such fellows who instead of having a fire of their own seek to warm by the fire of others. Among the visitors was a middle-aged man and a boy. The middle-aged man was lean looking with a straggling beard and full of talk. He made of himself a great hero and it was a wonder what all he had passed through. There arose a quarrel between him and the boy about some strawberries. It seemed that the boy had promised him some but had not kept his promise. The middle-aged man finally said, "If I don't get them strawberries, I'm going to cut your ears off." I never learned whether the man got his berries or the boy lost his ears; most likely neither.

While we were loading up getting ready to leave town I was left on the street to mind the horses. A stout short negro came up and drew out a post card. He asked me to read it for him. I was no expert at reading writing and the card was poorly written; but by his prompting we managed to make out that it was about a barber shop. I thought my brothers would never get through with the trading, for I was getting awfully cold. It seemed to me I had never struck such a cold place in all my life. I actually believe if I had been made to stand there another half hour I would have frozen stiff. But, my, I was glad when they finally did come out and said, "We

are ready to go now." The horses were as cold as I was and we rattled out of Nashville in a hurry.

Nearly forty years afterwards being again in the same city, I went back to the Vanderbilt and tried to identify myself with the country boy and his first impressions of the place. What a change! Many more buildings had been erected. Trees had been planted and were now grown to be large. The red gullies were all gone and everywhere was beautiful and green.

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