MEMOIRS

L. G. FOWLER

Isaiah Getchell Fowler

Born January 27, 1851

Nettie Bee Fowler

March 11, 1863
August 24, 1890

Two decades and a half are nearly gone
Since God recalled Her from my home and life.
Yet lost Her I have not, for every dawn
But brings me nearer to my Angel Wife.

Mine is She still, I her's, She mine, forever.
God gave us to each other. Who shall say
That death hath power such holy bond to sever?
My Spirit Wife, I come to thee, some day.

Naomi, *my first born, my darling daughter;*
Living and speaking likeness of that other
When, lovely girl, I sought her and I brought her
To my poor home and self, your angel Mother:

Take this poor book, and judge it not by measure
Of author–talent nor by weight of learning.
But let your heart find pleasure in the treasure
Of father-love, your daughter-love discerning.

To My Beloved Children.

I am getting old, and in the natural course of things, the time remaining to me for active work must be short. I have long cherished the wish to put in permanent form some of the incidents of your early childhood, your actions, sayings and individual peculiarities; also, some memoirs of your angel mother, who was taken from us when you were too young to retain more than a dim recollection of her love and care. All these things, as fresh in my own mind as the events of yesterday, must, of necessity, be lost to you at my death unless I succeed in the undertaking. Fully realizing my inability to do justice to the work, I as fully realize that I am the only human being now living, at all competent to undertake it.

I had meant to make only a few short references to my own early life, thinking they might serve to explain, in some measure, traits and inclinations observable in you, as well as offer some small excuse for my own failure to rise above the mediocre. But the recollections grew, and crowded upon me, and refused to be ignored, until I find they have taken much more than their rightful share of space, and vastly more than I had meant to accord them. For this defect, and for the many others, I ask your indulgence.

So, take this gift from your father, who loves you better than all the world. In future years may it help to refresh your minds with pleasant thoughts of your younger days, and with kindly memories of your father and mother.

Harry, *my eldest son, my first man-child;*
Joy bearing first boy baby, could I tell you
The pride your coming brought, and heart-beats wild,
It would, I know, to loving smiles impel you.

I give you this poor product from my store
Of memories of your early life and mine.
Deal kindly with its defects, I implore,
And let your love its crudities refine.

Frankie, *my baby boy, my latest gift*
From her the angels took so long ago
Leaving my sky deep clouded with no rift
Appearing, for a time, to light my woe;

Take this, my book of memories, and take
With it your father's tender love and blessing.
May it well please you, and sometimes awake
Consoling thoughts when cares of life are pressing.

Earliest Recollections.

My very earliest recollection is of being held prisoner on a cellar door at the back of the very poor house in which we had our home, in Covington, Indiana. My mother had to be away a good part of the day, teaching, and out of her scanty salary she paid the family who occupied another part of the house, to care for me during her absence. I think it likely, though I am not sure, that she took my brother Henry, three years older than I, to school with her.

I remember that the family's name was Snodgrass, and I also remember what probably is not true, that it consisted of at least five hundred children, big and little, but all older than I. This I know was true—that it seemed to be each one's sole duty in life to slap me whenever I ventured to escape from the cellar door. And, in strict justice, I am bound to admit that the duty was seldom neglected. Indeed, so zealously was it performed that more than once some particularly amiable member of the family would reach over and give me a slap for good measure. I did not know then, and I do not know now, why they slapped me, and can only account for it on the theory that they were afforded some brute pleasure in tyranizing over one too helpless and weak to resist or resent. I remember that I sat there during the long hours, full of terror and cut to the heart by their ridicule and taunts, never hearing a kind word, or even one that was not unkind, addressed to me; not allowed the poor relief of crying or of making known even my actual and urgent necessities without incurring the inevitable slap.

This condition would prevail until a few minutes before half past four, when my mother was expected home. Then Mrs. Snodgrass would take me in her arms, carry me around to the front yard, call me honey, and make her children bring me their "pretties" to play with. The "pretties" consisted of bright pebbles, bits of colored glass and the like, for the Snodgrasses, too, were very poor; but they were treasures of untold value in my eyes and to be allowed to handle them

those few minutes each day was royal luxury. So my mother always found me in the best of spirits and surrounded by the lovingest of friends, each striving to outdo the others in adding to the happiness of the little child she had confided to their care.

Ancestry.

My mother's maiden name was Sarah Susan Getchell, and she was born either in Gardner or Hallowell, Maine. I have heard her speak of her early life in the two towns and am not quite sure as to which was her birthplace. Her father was a granite cutter of moderate means and her mother died when she was too young to remember much about her. Her stepmother, I judge, was a good woman in her way, but much imbued with New England sternness, and had little sympathy or patience with the two stepchildren—your grandmother and your great-aunt Mary, two years younger. Her father must have been very stern, too, for I have heard her speak of having to ask her stepmother's pardon on her bended knees, for carelessly dropping a fork while wiping the dishes.

Both girls received the usual common school education of those times and both earned enough money—my mother by teaching, Aunt Mary by working in the Lowell factories—to take them through Mount Holyoke Seminary, at that time the highest institution of learning open to women.

About that time ex-Governor Slade of Vermont, conceived the idea of sending well educated and capable young women from New England to supply the urgent need of competent teachers in the far western states—that is to say, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. My mother was one of the first chosen and she was sent to Paris, Illinois, but soon transferred to Covington, Indiana, where she taught many years, married, and bore her children, five in all. Of these the firstborn, Charles, and the thirdborn, Mary, died in infancy. The other three are, as you know, still living—your Uncle Harry, born in December, 1857; your Aunt Ida, born in October, 1865,

and myself, born in January, 1861. Her married life was rendered unhappy by my father's inclination to drink and consequent failure to provide properly for his family. Soon after my birth he went to the war, and I, of course, knew nothing of him until his return. I have a dim recollection of his being home on a furlough, and of my wondering why he was going back to Little Rock. As he was a large man it seemed to me that a big rock would be more appropriate. I probably got the impression from his saying that he must be back in Little Rock at a certain time. Foolish as it seems, I cannot to this day, hear or think of Little Rock without a vision of a large man trying by some magic means to force entrance into a pebble. My only other recollections of my father during this furlough are of my disinclination to kiss him because of the "stickers" on his face, and his giving me my first horseback ride on a very lame horse which he borrowed for the purpose.

My father was generally regarded as naturally a very brilliant man, and it was frequently said that but for his unfortunate dissipation he would have gone to congress and served with credit. He had been twice elected to the office of sheriff and was still serving in that capacity at the time of his marriage with my mother. He had previously been married to a good woman whose maiden name was Joannah Furr. She had borne him seven children, three of whom survived her. Rowland, the eldest, was a good-hearted boy but wildly inclined and gave my mother much anxiety. At the age of fifteen he ran away and enlisted in the army. Our father was already in another division, and, as Rowland died in camp at Corinth, Miss., they never saw each other again. Evans was a noble boy and helped my mother as much as a little boy could. She loved him sincerely and I have often heard her speak tenderly and proudly of his having voluntarily walked several miles into the country to a man who owed her for tuition, and dragged home a sack of flour on a little handwagon that he himself had made. I believe he loved her as his own mother and long after he had left home to make his own way he frequently came to her for advice and sympathy. He must have been an exceptionally bright boy, for at the age of eighteen he was teaching school and

afterward could easily secure a school whenever he chose to teach. At the age of twenty-two he married one of his pupils, a Miss Kittie Rowland. She was entirely too young to undertake safely and wisely the duties of wifehood, being less than fifteen years old, though more matured than most girls of that age. Still they loved each other truly and would have passed a happy life together but for the continual nagging of her relatives, who objected to the marriage, not so much on account of her tender years as because of the fact that my brother was poor, while her father (then dead) had been considered wealthy for those times. Three children were born to them: Myrta, who died when less than two years old, and Zeta and Byron, who are still living and whom you know. Evans died in 1876, under distressing circumstances, not to be recounted here. To the last he passionately loved his wife and children, and had the respect and confidence of all who knew him. He had undoubted talent in the direction of music, and was always in demand as a leader of singing schools, as well as instructor in the ordinary branches of learning. It was said, too, that he had decided histrionic talent which, in more favorable circumstance, might have developed to a marked degree.

America, the youngest, was not entirely bright in her mind, and was a source of much anxiety and distress to my mother, caused in large measure by mischief-making friends of her own mother, who taught her that her father had done wrong in giving her a stepmother and that she ought to resent the intrusion by making her all the trouble possible. As she grew older, however, she had a high regard for her stepmother and mourned sincerely when she died. To the day of her own death, twelve years later, she spoke of my mother with the most kindly affection. Once, she even precipitated a hand-to-hand fight in which she came off victorious over a woman who had ventured to probe the old sore of her having had a tyranical stepmother. She married a man by the name of William Cox, who, as far as I know, is still living. They had a son of whom, unfortunately, I know nothing, except that I have heard indirectly that he fought in the Philippine war. America died in 1884, after I had located in Kansas.

A Noble Woman's Trials.

During my father's absence in the army my mother must have had a very hard time indeed. With the three step-children and her own two little ones to look after and provide for by her own efforts, and with none the best of health, only a woman of strong determination could have gone through the trial as well as she did. She was considered an excellent teacher and could always have a school when she was able to teach. Teachers then were not paid as liberally as now, however, and, while she received the highest salary paid to female teachers in that part of Indiana, it never amounted to more than $35.00 a month until we moved to Attica, of which I will speak later. As the public schools of Covington were held but six months in the year it can be seen that her income from that source was not princely. She eked out by teaching subscription schools and by giving lessons in drawing, of which she had considerable knowledge. Also, some of the other teachers took lessons in grammar from her at night, she being recognized as an exceptionally good grammarian. Of course there were times of sickness when she could earn nothing at all.

Flour was $18.00 a barrel, brown sugar 14 cents a pound, calico 75 cents a yard and other things in proportion. As a consequence we ate cornbread most of the time, and for extra, bread made from "middlings," a kind of compromise between flour and shorts. It was good bread—at least it tasted good to us—though dark in color. I think we never had meat in those days aside from an occasional piece of liver. My mother usually had a garden and we ate a great many tomatoes. I can remember many meals consisting entirely of cornbread baked on a griddle, and tomatoes. Once an old lady, well meaning but slightly "snug", called my brother Henry in and gave him what she called some bones. Bones they were—rib bone from which she had so industriously scraped all semblance of flesh that, hungry as we were, we could not scratch off with our teeth even the flavor of meat.

A few days afterward the good soul again hailed my brother and said, "tell your maw when she wants some more bones just to send over and get them. We've butchered and we've got a lot of bones." We often had mush and milk—always skimmed milk—for supper and were very fond of it. After we moved to Attica we fared better, but I am speaking of our life in Covington.

I learned when I was older that my mother had often gone days together without food except what she had in her garden, in order that we children might not feel so bitterly the pangs of hunger. At least one time, none of us had had any bread for several days. I must have been four years old then for I remember it with tolerable distinctness. My mother had a dime which she had saved for the time when it would be absolutely necessary to spend it. At last she sent America and me to buy a loaf of bread with the precious coin. It bought a very small loaf and on the way home the temptation was too much for us. We peeled off the soft fat place where the loaf had been torn from its fellow. Then we gouged out just a little from the inside, then another little, until when we arrived home we had only the two crusts, as bare as it was possible to skin them. I think I have never tasted food as good as that loaf of bread.

After my father returned from the war he continued to drink and waste what money he earned.

My sister Ida was born in October, 1865. When she was a few weeks old my mother took her own three children and went to Aunt Mary's in Illinois. The step children had been placed with some relatives in the same county, as my mother could no longer provide for us all. I do not know how long we stayed in Illinois but probably several weeks. On our return we found that every bit of our poor household goods had been sold, even to the dishes. My mother afterward redeemed some special pieces which had been given her by her father and her sister.

She obtained permission to leave me with the lady who had rented the house in our absence, while she took my brother and the baby and set out to find another house. It was late in the evening, but she was so well known, and her word was considered so good, that she had no difficulty in

securing, not only a house, but also enough furniture to get along with, and everything ready for us to sleep in that night. The house was a large building that had done service as a paint shop for wagons and buggies. There was a large room in front and a small one at the back. We lived in the small room and she at once secured a good number of subscriptions for a school in the front room, which placed us at least beyond the reach of actual want for the time. The school was called, mostly in a spirit of goodnatured fun, "The Paint-Shop School." A block or two away a lady taught another school in her kitchen, and the boys of the "paint-shop school" and those of the "kitchen school" had many a quarrel, not to mention a few actual fights, in the interest of loyalty, each to his own school. The other lady, a Mrs. Knight, and, my mother were the warmest of friends, then and always. The "paint-shop school" was so far successful as to provide us with a living and enable my mother to pay off all indebtedness for the furniture and the benches. When the public schools opened again the next winter she was employed, and never again until her death was without an engagement in the public schools.

An incident occurs to me at this moment, an incident I have never been able to explain to my own mind. While one of the older classes in the "paint-shop school" was reciting in oral spelling I came in from the yard. It seems that the word "phlegm" had gone clear down the line without being spelled correctly. The whole class seemed good-naturedly ashamed and as I came in one of the members said, "let Isie spell it." All the older pupils were very good to me and the remark was no doubt meant partly to please me and partly to relieve the feeling of embarrassment. My mother, glad of a chance to relieve the situation, smiled and said, "spell phlegm, Isie." And I spelled it—correctly and without the slightest hesitation, to the astonishment of the whole school, my mother included. So far as I know I had never heard the word before, or even known that there was such a word in the language, and I had no idea of its meaning. I suppose it was merely one of the curious happenings that we sometimes run across.

My mother never lived with my father again, though she

never dreamed of a divorce. He was always welcome on the rare occasions when he came to see us and to the day of her death she cherished the hope that some time the family would be happily reunited. After her death my father told me that he too had looked forward hopefully to that happy time. I never heard either of them say an unkind word of, or to the other. As I look back to those lost years and think of the sole cause of their unhappiness and hardships, I feel amply justified in declining to regard myself as a partisan of the saloon and its destroying influence. I thank the Good Father every day that neither I nor any of my three boys have the soul and body blighting inclination to use intoxicating liquors in any form. I also thank Him for a home where the dealer in such destruction is an outlaw, despised by the decent and self-respecting. No, I hardly think I could truthfully say that I am in favor of returning to the saloon system!

I was sick a good deal, and one time particularly remains in my memory. I was unable to eat anything for some days and had a great longing for an orange, a luxury of which I had had but one small taste in my life. I believe I had never asked for one for I knew they were not for such poor people as we. Another great longing I had during that same illness, and that was for a false-face that I had seen in a store window. I don't know why I so longed for it but the thought haunted by partial delirium. I did not know my mother knew I wanted it, but one morning I awoke feeling very bright and clear in my head, the first time for some days. I was quite weak but had no pain and everything seemed very cool and pleasant. My mother was leaning her poor tired head on the back of one of the two school benches, which, placed front to front, constituted my bedstead. Her eyes were red and full of tears but when I looked up she smiled and said, "Isie, do you want a false face?" I was so taken by surprise that I only said "o-o-oh!" and burst out crying. She immediately sent my brother Henry with the fifteen cents to buy the treasure. And he, loving brother that he was, ran every step of the long way to the store and back. He, too, had been crying, and he has since told me that neither he nor our mother expected me to live longer than the day out. It is by no means impossible that the joy

of possessing the coveted false face contributed, in some measure, to my recovery.

My mother never, of her own accord, referred to that time, and never seemed to like talking about it. I have no doubt she had gone down so deep into the dark valley that night that she never quite recovered from the experience. I can understand the feeling now, though I could not at that time. I, too, have groped through the bitter darkness of that valley.

I have some recollection of the presidential campaign of 1868, when Grant and Colfax ran against Seymour and Blair. My mother was an ardent Union adherent, and, of course, in favor of Grant. When I asked her whether I was a Republican or Democrat, she replied that I was a Union man. My inquiry was inspired by a desire to be able to answer the question frequently put to me in mock seriousness, as such questions always have been, and always will be, put to children by grown-ups. I take it that my mother liked the name of "Union man" better than that of a party.

Indiana has always been a great battle ground for political campaigns and must have been the scene of very bitter contests at that particular time. I remember bonfires that seemed to reach the sky, and long torchlight processions that frightened me. I also remember my mother's taking me to a great meeting, where a large number of young women sang "Grant Shall Be Pres-ee-dunt, Ri-ing, Ring the Bell"; and where a very sour-faced man, whose personal architecture ran largely to front porch, ranted up and down in front of the audience, shaking his fists and giving in general an impression of great rage. My mother said he was Governor Baker. I do not know what he said, but incline to the opinion that it was somewhat derogatory to the opposition. I thought at the time that he was enormously angry with all of us; and when he started down the aisle toward where I sat, his scanty hair sticking straight up, what with the perspiration and frequent upward brushings with his hands, and his fists cracking loudly, I scrambled to the other side of my mother and clung to her in a panic. He did not, so far as I could see, find the object of his wrath in our aisle and made his furious way back, only to renew the parade in

another direction. Somehow, I have always connected him with the ranting political speeches I have heard since then, and it is hard for me to take such a speaker seriously, especially if he is talking for an office, as this one was. I always feel more like laughing than applauding when I hear such an oration, for it seems the veriest burlesque. I do like to hear a man who really knows something of value, and who is willing and able to present it in a decent and pleasant manner, giving reasons for his belief, and also giving the audience credit for ability to weigh the reasons and arguments offered. If he does not do this, but depends instead on invective, and malignment of the opposition, arbitrarily classing them as dishonest and insincere, I would as lief hear an angry boy calling his opponent "another'n".

Recollections of Covington, Indiana.

Soon after this election my mother was offered one of the grades in the public schools of Attica, fourteen miles north of Covington. As she had already engaged to teach in Covington she declined the offer. It was renewed and the Attica superintendent came twice to urge her acceptance of the position. It was a very great temptation to her, for the salary was $45.00 a month for a nine months school as against $33.00 a month for a six months' school. It meant the difference between the most pinching poverty and a comparatively comfortable living. She was finally persuaded to make the change and it proved a good one in many ways. Covington was a saloon town, having in fact, a larger number of saloons than of legitimate places of business. I have not seen the town for more than thirty years, but have recently been told that it is still the same old saloon town and has not appreciably progressed since that time. Attica was a much cleaner town, had a far better school system, and few saloons. Another result that my mother hoped for and realized was an improvement in the disposition of my brother Henry. Poor boy, he was very sensitive about his red hair and much troubled by the other

boys who continually made sport of it. Also, his name was a source of grief, being variously metamorphosed into "Horny", "Hen", "Hence", "Hank", etc. At his request we changed his name to "Harry" on our removal to Attica, and "Harry" he has been ever since. He had no trouble over either his name or hair, but at once became a popular and favorite companion among other boys of his age and a little older, and only on rare occasions had temporary fallings-out with them. My mother was always glad to have our companions visit at our house. While our fare must have been inferior to what most of them were accustomed to, her friendly and motherly way of making them one of us must have made up the difference, or more, for they came frequently and always seemed glad they were there.

My mother was a good manager and had the knack, probably acquired by necessity, of making cheap things taste good. Brought up as she had been, near the ocean, she was a great lover of fish, and we ate a good deal of codfish, about the only sea food we could afford. We all were fond of it and I have never eaten codfish, either cooked with gravy or made into balls with potatoes, that seemed quite as good as she prepared. This is, perhaps, owing in part to the well recognized fact that all kinds of food taste better to a boy than to a man, but I am persuaded that this is not the full explanation, for I ate codfish at other tables while still a hungry boy. Within the last year, Mr. Lon Cambern of Erie, Kansas, banker and state senator, in speaking to Professor Risdon of his boyhood acquaintance with us, said, "My, I can taste those codfish balls yet. I don't believe I have ever eaten anything so good in my life."

Early School Days.

The first day I went to school in Attica I was assigned to the first grade at a hazard. I was seven years old, but very small and thin, and I suppose I looked as if I belonged there. I was so ashamed that I could have died cheerfully, it seemed to me, but I had no thought of questioning the

judgment of the superintendent who had placed me there. When my time came to read the teacher looked astonished, had me turn over some pages and read again. Then she took a book from her desk and had me read from it, after which she called in the superintendent and asked him to hear me. In less than a minute he laughed good-naturedly, as at a joke on himself, patted my head and took me to the fourth grade, or "number four," where I was enrolled as "sixty-three." All pupils were enrolled by numbers and in calling the roll the numbers instead of the names were called. There were actually sixty-three in that room and a few others were enrolled after my entrance. My recollection is that the entire enrollment of number four that year was seventy-one. Numbers one and two had each a larger number while the higher grades had somewhat fewer. I am certain, however, that none had less than fifty-five. I sometimes think of this when I hear of teachers complaining of being overworked with a room of thirty-five.

My mother was assigned to number seven—a very trying room at that time, the last teacher having given it up in discouragement. My mother was considered an excellent disciplinarian as well as an instructor of more than ordinary ability. By some means, which I do not know, in a few weeks she had the good will and hearty cooperation of every pupil in her room, and I think any of the boys would have fought for her. From a hotbed of rebellion it had become a model of orderliness and school loyalty. Number seven was next to the highest grade, probably about paralleling the ninth and tenth grades as we have them now. In about a year my mother was transferred to number eight, the highest grade, comprising latin, higher mathematics, rhetoric, logic, natural philosophy and literature. She taught this grade until her death and was engaged for the same position for the year following the vacation during which she died.

My Mother's Death.

During the summer of 1872 Aunt Mary and Uncle William drove over from their home in Rossville, Illinois, to

make us a visit. When they went home they took me with them for a short stay, to my intense delight. My mother was glad for my sake, and I can see her now as she stood in the street after all the good-byes and kisses and hugs had been given. As the horses started she waved her hand and called, "Good-bye, sonny." I never heard her voice again, except in my dreams. One night in my bed upstairs, I was awakened by voices and footsteps below. I don't know why, but I began crying softly to myself. In a few minutes Aunt Mary came up and kneeling by my bed put her arms around me. She held me close for a little while, then said, "Now, don't let it grieve your little heart too much; your poor Ma is dead." I made no reply but clung to her and kept on weeping as I had been before she came to me. It must have been about the middle of the night, for we were many miles on the way to Attica before daylight. My mother had been seized with one of her frequent attacks of neuralgia of the side and stomach. The doctor had warned her that the affection would eventually reach her heart and she had fully expected that it would, though she hoped to live until her children were old enough to help themselves. I think the end came as the doctor had predicted, though my father always believed that her death was hastened by an overdose of morphine administered to relieve the dreadful pain. It is not a pleasant view to take and I have always preferred to accept the attending physician's word. At any rate her death occurred within three days' from the time she was taken down. My father had been sent for and was there when we arrived. As it happened, no relative was with her when she died. Harry was in the country, he having for the last two years earned his own clothing by working on a farm during the summer. My sister Ida had been taken to a neighbor's house to be cared for while other good neighbors were ministering to the poor suffering mother.

The funeral was the largest ever known in Attica up to that time, for no one ever lived there who was more universally beloved and respected.

A New Home.

The day after the funeral I was sent to stay temporarily with my half-brother, Evans, in Chambersburg. The poor belongings of my mother were divided in this way: The little empty purse and the album were given to me. My brother Harry took the trunk, and my half-sister took all the dishes, including the keepsakes mentioned before, all of which she sold, poor girl, soon afterward for a dollar. Among the keepsakes, I remember in particular two very old and very large plates, not round but with large scallops, ornamented with blue pictures of the most antiquated looking folks on their way to church—the church itself, as well as some trees being shown, also in blue. I am no antiquarian but I have little doubt but the plates would be worth a small fortune, could they have been saved until now. America was also awarded one or two of the dresses. All the other clothing and the bedding was taken by Aunt Mary and Uncle William for the benefit of my sister Ida, whom they took to their home and kept until her marriage. They also took some drawings my mother had made in her younger days and some keepsakes. I forgot to mention that I received a small Bible which my mother treasured as a memento of her father. I still have it, but, unfortunately the title page was destroyed by a little child where I once lived. It must be very old for it was given to my mother when she was a little girl and she would have been eighty-eight years old had she lived until now. My brother has the large family Bible. All the other goods were shipped to my half brother in Chambersburg and stored in a loft over his house. He was given whatever he and his wife could make use of and the rest were sold by my father, including a beautiful rag carpet my mother had just finished that summer. That is, he sold all but the wash boiler. I sold that myself and bought a pocketbook with the fifty cents. I never had another cent until after the pocketbook was all worn to pieces, so the investment could hardly be considered a profitable one.

I was sent alone to Chambersburg and was very fearful of not meeting with a very warm welcome. I had been given a rude diagram showing the route I must walk over after leaving the railroad at Veedersburg and had no difficulty in finding the way. But owing to the feeling just spoken of I took a great deal longer time than was necessary to make the trip. On the way I was beset by temptation in the form of a large walnut tree with the ground beneath covered with green nuts. Conforming to my invariable rule never to miss a chance to eat, I sat down and filled up, cracking the nuts with stones. Through this and other delays I did not reach Chambersburg until late in the afternoon, when I found the house deserted, the family having gone into the country for the day. This discovery was a relief, since it put off a while longer the ordeal of appearing before them in the character of dependent relation. My fears proved groundless, for when Evans came home he took me right into his big boyish heart. His wife, Kitty, too, was very good to me and for a time she seemed glad to have me there. As I have said, she was little more than a child herself, barely sixteen, though a wife and mother, and it is not to be wondered at that she presently got to feeling that I was a burden on them, which I really was, and began to complain, not to my father who was responsible for my being there, but to me, who had no means of helping myself.

Running Away.

Being as sensitive as the average child, I was made very miserable and finally ran off to my Aunt Celia Blackburn, not far away, and asked permission to stay until my father would get me a place where I could make myself wanted. She was very poor but took me in and never let me feel as other than the most welcome of guests. In a few weeks I went to the country to stay with a family whom I will call Randall. Mrs. Randall was the first women I ever heard use foul and profane language. I had never dreamed it possible that any woman could tolerate—much less use—such words. She had most terrifying fits of temper during which

she would swear and call foul names like the veriest hoodlum. Since her invectives were directed impartially toward her husband and baby boy as well as me, I ought not, perhaps, have felt hurt. I was much afraid of her, though she never actually struck me. I had never before known a woman who was not refined and gentle in manner, with the exception of Mrs. Snodgrass, and Mrs. Randall's behavior kept me in an almost continual state of terror. She was a good cook and I had plenty of good food while I stayed with the family, which mitigated in some measure the other treatment I received. I had never tried to milk a cow and was much afraid when I was given a bucket and told to try my hand at it. They had two cows—one of mature years and sedate manners, the other a vicious creature with her first calf. This young cow was assigned to me as being better adapted to my experience, both of us being young and untrained. It was severe winter weather, the snow being several inches deep. Both cows were kept in the barn lot without shelter of any kind except the side of the stable and the manure pile, and there was no earthly way to make them stay in any particular spot while being milked. Mr. Randall's cow was, as I have said, well behaved, and he being a fast milker, was usually able to finish her up in three or four sittings, the cow making stately pilgrimages to various points of interest between times. Mine, being but a silly young thing, naturally took a less serious view of life and behaved in a manner that was little short of frivolous. Indeed her attitude towards me frequently verged upon the insulting. Instead of quietly but firmly detaching herself from the squeezing hand and decorously taking up her headquarters elsewhere as the older cow did, she would suddenly lift herself high in the air, send her right hind foot more or less vaguely in my direction, and after various contortions and acrobatic feats that would have earned her a hundred dollars a week in any good circus, look back at me from the farthest corner of the lot and snort—playfully perhaps, derisively certainly. Occasionally the snort would be accompanied by another kick towards me; additional proof of her youthful folly, for she could not possibly have reached me with her foot at that distance. I was not actually hurt many

times but the bucket was frequently kicked many feet away, thus bringing upon me the dreaded but sure tirade of billingsgate for the loss of the milk. Once I received a tremendous blow in the equator, upon the exact spot I had hoped presently to comfort with a warm supper. For a short time I lay completely folded up and thought I should never again be able to breathe. When I could I made my way to the house dragging the empty bucket (for I could not yet walk) and again doubled up on the doorstep. I probably could have made myself heard but was afraid of the expected burst of anger and did not try. I think I had a kind of dim feeling that it would be nice if I could lie there and freeze to death, and so avoid the awful tongue-lashing that I dreaded so much. I had not lain very long, however, before Mrs. Randall came to the door and seeing me, began her usual tirade. There I was, lazy lout, lying down when I had been sent to do my little bit of chores, and she a-feeding me like a prince after taking me out of pure charity, and trying to make something out of me, etc. Then after her favorite oath of swearing on a — — stack of Bibles as high as this — — — — of a house, that she would not stand it any longer, she grabbed my arm and pulled me upright and into the house. The sudden straightening out and the jerk caused such excruciating pain that I collapsed to the floor, and, in spite of my half frozen condition, broke into a sweat. Luckily for me there was a visitor, a Mrs. Dice, who had more sense, or at least, more compassion. She saw that I was really much hurt and took me tenderly in her arms and held me until I was better. I did not cry at all until she showed this kindness but at such unexpected relief I sobbed and shook a good deal. Mrs. Randall, too, relented, and said I needn't go back out to finish the milking that night—an unexpected concession. I was pretty sore and had frequent twinges of pain for several days, but that was all. No serious damage had been done, and the memory of Mrs. Dice's motherly arms and sympathetic words was more than compensation. Many years afterward Mrs. Dice told me that she longed to take me home with her but did not dare suggest it. Mr. and Mrs. Randall and the baby slept downstairs and kept a fire going on the coldest nights. My bed

was over another part of the house which never was warm. This would not have mattered if they had allowed me sufficient covering. For some reason I could only have one comfort and one quilt upon a straw bed without even a sheet. I lay awake a long time almost every night during the winter, too cold to sleep. I never knew why I could not have more covering, for there was a closet piled full down stairs. Mrs. Randall was ill a week once and Mr. Randall's sister came to do the housework. She did not venture to get more covers for me but after the first night she would come and put her own dress and skirt over me when she retired—an act of the purest kindness that I could not forget if I lived many more years than I expect to.

Mr. Randall was an easy-going man of little force, and was in almost as great terror of his wife as I was. He approached her in the most diplomatic manner when offering a suggestion and I imagined I could see him actually tremble while awaiting the result. Washday was usually the worst strain on Mrs. Randall's temper. Some times she relieved her feelings by straining the flour starch through the tails of my only "other" shirt, making the lower half of that garment as stiff as pasteboard, much to my discomfort and grief. I told my brother about it once, and though more than forty years have elapsed since then, it still rankles in his memory and he frequently speaks of it in a tone of resentment. I know that if he, himself, had been the victim he would long ago have ceased to think of it, except as a humorous incident of his early life—as I do, and as he does regard many more serious offenses against himself.

An Empty Stocking at Christmas.

It was at this place that I spent my first Christmas after the death of my mother. Poor as we had always been, I had never passed a Christmas without a present of some kind, however cheap, and it never occurred to me that such a thing could be. So I hung up my stocking, only to find it empty in the morning, and to be laughed at for my pains. Still I cherished a kind of hope that something would turn

up in the course of the day that I might by a stretch of the imagination regard as a Christmas present; and in the evening, sure enough, it came. Mr. Randall had brought home a sack of candy the evening before, from which the family had been eating frequently through the day, without offering me any. Just before bed time, however, he gave me a stick, with the admonition that it was not good for my teeth. I was so glad I could have blessed him. I did not eat the precious candy but took it to bed with me, and hugged it in my arms, saying over and over to myself, as long as I was awake, "I got a Christmas present, I got a Christmas present."

At New Year's I fared better—in fact, had a splendid time. I was allowed to go to Attica for a couple of days, to my great joy, and spent the time with the Brant family, good friends when my mother was living, and always. The family consisted, besides the father and mother, of four girls and four boys, and was, I think, the most perfectly united family I have ever known. They all made me extremely welcome. Indeed, they made me feel exactly as if I belonged there as much as any of them, which is the welcomest welcome that can possibly be extended, as any poor child can vouch for. If the other boys got into mischief I was glad to be in the same deal and to get my scolding with the rest. It was a great deal more satisfactory than to be exempted as a guest. There were two boys of about my age and we all fared exactly alike in the matter of New Year's presents—each of us being given a popgun and a large candy cane. Not a thing was done or said, or a look given, to indicate that I was any other than a member of the family, entitled to right to all the privileges and subject to all the rules of discipline that the other children were. No one but those who have known the bitterness of being looked upon as an alien, an intruder and a burden, can fully appreciate what this treatment in the Brant home was to me. When we became too noisy we were "fired" to the basement, told to behave ourselves, etc., always including me with the others, to my great satisfaction. I fully believe that if we had been adjudged worthy of a whipping I should have received mine with the rest, and been glad of it. That's the way to treat a

child; make him feel as if he "belonged." At night the old folks and all joined in games and singing, Mr. Brant accepting without protest the laughing jibes at his awkward playing and poor singing, from his youngest boy. I can hardly recall any happier event of my boyhood after the death of my mother, than those two days and nights. When I had to go Mrs. Brant kissed me with genuine tears in her eyes and told me not to stay away so long again. She did not say "come and visit us again soon." That would not have sounded half so good. I did not see any of them again for about two years when I again had the opportunity of staying with them a few days. Grace, a little older than I, had died in the meantime and the father was in feeble health, caused by his occupation of marble cutter. I was received as before, like a member of the family returning after an unwarrantable absence. They were in straightened circumstances and had rented part of the house to another family—a very pleasant and very highly educated couple. And thereby hangs a tale of distress which must move your hearts to compassion for the woes of your fourteen-year-old, smart-alec, to-be-father.

Display of Musical Talent.

One winter before my mother died some young ladies lived in two rooms of our house and attended school. They had an old piano and sometimes allowed me to amuse myself with it. I had made such wonderful progress and shown such extraordinary talent that I had learned to play "Mollie, Do You Love Me, Tell me, Tell Me True"; "Somebody Stole My Big Black Dog"; "Happy Day", and about half of "Yankee Doodle", all with one finger, and without striking the wrong keys more than half the time.

While looking through the open door of the parlor occupied by the couple referred to in the Brant house, I saw a very beautiful piano, and was possessed (I am sure "possessed" is the proper word) to say to my companions, in a tone and with a look supposedly suggesting a pensive mental attitude, "I'd like to get at that piano." Delighted, Maude,

a little younger than I, exclaimed, "Oh, can you play the piano?" I executed a mysterious and superior little smile indicating that I might have said more, had not modesty forbid, and replied, "Oh, not much—used to play a little." To my consternation she was up the stairs in a second and calling excitedly to Mrs. Whats-her-name, "Isie can play the piano!" In another second or so both the Whats-their-names were down, and I was hustled to the piano stool, while the good Mrs. Whats-her-name filled the rack with sheets of music which, so far as I was concerned, might as well have been blocks of cuneiform inscriptions. The kind lady stood politely at my side, her finger and thumb holding an upper corner of the first leaf, prepared to turn the page for me, while the husband stood in the door, ready to enjoy the performance of the infant phenomenon. As it turned out I am convinced that he did enjoy it, and to a fuller extent than he had anticipated. Now, in such a predicament, what could a poor boy do, besides wishing with all his heart that a kind fate would strike him with a sudden attack of apoplexy? The lady was not long in discovering the truth and was kind enough to suggest that perhaps I only played by ear, as some of the best performers did. Now, I did not know what playing by ear was, any more than I knew the meaning of the spots and crooks on the sheets before me. I said, "No, mom, I just play with this finger." And with what little semblance of dignity I could command I presented my entire repertoire. How I ever got through alive is almost a mystery to me yet, for from the feeling in my face I must have had a temperature of at least two hundred and fifty, although my heart was away down in my feet and not working at all. It is wonderful what polite training will do; that man and woman—I mean that gentleman and lady—never cracked a smile until they were safe in their room again upstairs. Then I heard two bumps, which I knew were caused by the violent and sudden contact of two human bodies with the floor, and shrieks of merriment drifted down in spite of evident attempts to suppress them. But my companions were loyal to the last. "Huh!" said Maude, "I like them pieces of yourn lots better'n these'ns she palys," touching the sheets contemptuously; "I wish you'd learn 'em to

me." "Oh, come on, let's go play; pyanners ain't no fun," said the boys, and away we went. I wonder, now, if it can be possible that *untrained* politeness is even kinder than the other variety? Never a look, smile or word from any of those children, indicated that they had been disappointed, or that my performance was not all that could be desired; nor did they embarrass me by referring to the subject. When I next saw Mrs. Brant she was a widow, dying slowly of tuberculosis at the home of her oldest daughter. She was so touched at what she considered my kindness in coming to see her that she cried. I cried too, for it seemed like losing my mother again. The children had scattered and were making their own way as well as they could. I have never seen any of them since.

A Descending Ascension.

My next home was with a family named Ellis, where my father placed me after the winter at Randall's. They were very good to me, and their son, slightly younger than myself, was my inseparable companion. They were deeply in my father's debt for medical services and boarded me on account. Cary and I were allowed to use an old strawstack and it was a grand playground. We made what we called gymnastic poles and learned to do some very passable acting on them. We also rigged up a trapeze; and though it was not too high to be easily reached, I was convinced that the only allowable way was by means of a rope thrown over the bar, my foot in a stirrup at one end, as I had seen a man do at a circus. By dint of commandeering sundry old hame straps and pieces of string we succeeded in patching up the "ascending cord." I, as the only one who had seen the thing done, made the first ascent. That is to say, my feet did. They went up in record-breaking time, while my head proceeded with corresponding rapidity in the other direction. Though the apparatus was, so far as I could see, theoretically correct, yet I think there must have been some slight technical error, either in the mechanism or in my method of using it. I had no sooner placed my foot in the stirrup and given a pull at the other end of the rope than the whole scheme of creation seemed suddenly reversed. Cary thought he knew just how

the accident was caused and felt that he could have done better, but out of consideration for my feelings he declined my urgent invitation to illustrate his point. We decided that, after all, reaching the trapeze by the necessary short jump was a good way.

It was during my stay with this family that I attended a summer school at a little schoolhouse in the woods, called "Center Chapel." The teacher was a very pleasant young lady by the name of Mary Carson. She, as well as all the scholars, came to school barefoot, the only difference being that in deference to the dignity of her position, she always washed her feet on arrival, while the rest of us always didn't. On particularly hot and drowsy afternoons she would transfer us to the woods surrounding the schoolhouse and allow us to study and recite there, using such chunks and parts of fallen trees as we could find for seats. Sometimes during these periods an astonished rabbit or snake would appear for a moment, reconnoitre the situation and hasten off to report. On such occasions the teacher, recognizing the futility of any attempt to maintain order, was shrewd enough to issue immediate commands to capture or destroy the enemy. She had to hurry with the orders, too, to keep them from being obeyed before they were issued. So far as I can remember no pupil ever disobeyed one of these commands. She was really a lovable young woman, and I fully intended to marry her as soon as I could find a way to support her in the style to which she had been accustomed. I was twelve years old at that time and she was a large and full-grown woman. She afterward married the dirtiest and laziest looking man I ever saw and the last time I saw her she was a typical old slouch, with a half dozen dirty children. I believe that since that time I have not seriously regretted having lost her forever.

My sole worldly goods consisted in those days of a pair of bright green trousers, much too large in the seat, two shirts and about two-thirds of a cheap straw hat. A little later, but during the same term of school, my father bought two hats, exactly alike and gave me one of them. It was a very fine gray hat with a wide brim and high crown, such as gentlemen wore, and had cost enough to have supplied

me with a complete outfit of appropriate boy's clothing. Being the same size as his own hat, I had a world of trouble in keeping it adjusted so as to admit of my seeing out at all. At once upon my appearance on the school grounds with my new and ponderous headpiece I became an object of scorn and wrath among the other children, especially the girls, whereas all had been friendly before. The leader of the girls, Mattie, made up a song about my hat, which was taken up by her followers. I do not remember much of the song, but each verse wound up with "Silk and satin, calico, battin'." I could not go back to my old section of strawstack, as I should have been glad to do, for it had been destroyed. After a few days, however, the storm blew over and I was again in favor. I learned that the ill feeling had been caused not by the ridiculous figure I cut in the new hat, but by the belief that with so fine an article of clothing I must feel a sense of superiority. When they found me still willing to treat them as equals, notwithstanding my sudden entry into the fine clothes class, they liked me as well as ever. Possibly better, for it was doubtless regarded as no light condescension for one so richly apparelled to play on equal terms with the plain people.

Brothers Meet at Campmeeting.

Soon after my acquisition of the hat I was taken with the family to a campmeeting in the woods near the neighboring town of Hillsboro. My father had give me fifty cents to spend, the first money I had possessed since the washboiler episode. The family, after letting me out of the wagon, went to another part of the grounds to picnic with some friends. I did not know anyone there, or supposed I did not, and was standing apart from the crowd, very lonesome and very much perplexed, when my heart was made glad by the sight of my brother Harry, who had spotted me and was coming up with a broad grin. I believe, but am not sure, that this was the first time we had seen each other since our mother's death separated us. At any rate, it was our first meeting in a long time, and I could not have been happier at the sudden appearance of a good fairy. He said nothing at

the time about the queer appearance I made, but has since told me that I was the most pathetic, and at the same time the most comical, little figure he ever saw, with my immense hat and my broad-gauge breeches tapering almost to point below my knees. To this day he insists that I looked like an enlarged carpet tack. He kept me with him until time for me to go home with the folks.

He had a dollar and I my half. The only possible way to get anything to eat was to buy tickets at fifty cents each and wait for a chance to get into the only eating house on the camp grounds. It was conducted by some church organization and was as arrant a swindle as can be imagined. After waiting a long time we were finally admitted, but it was too late to share in even the poor food they had been serving. Nothing was left but a few boiled potatoes and an enormous yellow cucumber. No meat, no bread, not a morsel of anything but just the two or three potatoes and the cucumber. There was no such thing as getting our money back and we were threatened with arrest for suggesting it, so we ate the potatoes. I wanted Harry to take my half dollar but he would not, so he went home penniless and I with my capital intact. He had been making his own way on a farm ever since our mother died. I thought then, and I think now, that he is one of the best brothers that ever lived. One of the saddest reflections of these, my later years, is that some time in the not very distant future, either he or I must die first. I know that if I am the one, the blow will fall hard upon him; and should he be taken first I shall be completely broken. God, Good Father, be with the surviving one of us in that dark time, and give him strength to be a man!

Challenge to Teacher Accepted.

That fall I was again sent to live with my half-brother, Evans, his wife having consented to let me stay there that winter and go to school, in consideration of my father's building a much needed addition to their house. I had been there but a short time when their baby Myrta died, to the great grief of us all, but especially of the father, who was

terribly broken down. For a time he was morose and soured with the world, but gradually recovered his old-time happy disposition. That winter he taught as principal in the Hillsboro schools and Kittie and I were alone from Sunday evening to Friday evening. I went to school to a Miss Eliza Jack. She was a very old-fashioned teacher, with a very moderate degree of learning and a very large sense of the importance of whipping as an aid to education. As a matter of fact, in nearly, if not quite, all of the branches taught, I had made further advancement before my mother died than Miss Jack had made in her forty-odd years. She seemed to recognize this, and nearly always deferred to my opinion in matters of doubt regarding the lessons. This fact, combined with my total lack of books aside from my Attica ones which were entirely different from those used in her school, probably prevented me from gaining much in the way of education that winter. It is not at all impossible that an unwarranted feeling of superiority on my part also contributed to the unprofitableness of the term. One thing did occur that was of undoubted benefit to me. The teacher was a spinster of rather forbidding aspect, though really of a kindly disposition in spite of her views regarding corporal punishment. She was very tall and thin and had the longest neck I ever saw on a human being. It seemed to me that the fluted collar she wore, evidently in an attempt to shorten the appearance of that member was at least eight inches high, though it is, of course, possible that my untrained sense of perspective exaggerated its height somewhat.

Personally, I liked her and she liked me. But as I watched her making her sly way about the room, always with a huge switch, and every little while whacking away at the shoulders of some boy caught in a forbidden action, I could not resist the temptation to say to some of my cronies that no old maid could whip me. Most of them thought she could, but they were no doubt glad I felt that way about it, and hoped to see the test made. One morning I deliberately created the opportunity by whispering to my seatmate, being careful to keep technically within my rights by confining my whispering to questions about the lesson. Her eagle eye caught me at once, as I had intended it should, and without investigation she at once issued her pronunciamento to the effect that if she

caught me at it again she would attend to me, and that she was only prevented by my previous good record from administering the afore-mentioned attention then and there. I think I regarded this as more unkind than an immediate whipping would have been. To be pointed out as a man of peace among a nation of warriors is not usually taken in a kindly spirit by the self-respecting. As she stood shaking her big switch threateningly at me I rose in my place and said, picking up my slate by way of emphasis, "I dare you to touch me with that stick." Much to my surprise, not to say dismay, she did not seem entirely cast down by my heroic defiance, as I had made not the least doubt that she would. Here she came like a cyclone, yanked the slate out of my hand and through the window, and after it, the arithmetic at which I had made a wild grab. Things were happening and history being made with a rapidity probably never equalled in that school. In less time than I could have told it, or even thought it, I was high in the air, swinging round and round, occasionally reversing the circle, sometimes being churned up and down, and pendulum fashion; benches were being overturned in every direction, the stove was a wreck, and through it all the cries of frightened girls. The only recognizable conversation after the issuance of my knightly challenge was, "Let go of my hair!" followed by the brilliant repartee in gasping tones from somewhere in the air, "Then you lemme lone." Presently a very much enraged and chagrined little thirteen-year-old boy was being held as in a vise between the knees of a very much enraged maiden lady of excessive length of form, while the long and abundant mass of hair—unfortunately for her, genuine—was being disengaged, strand by strand from the deathlike grip of the thirteen-year-old hands. That task completed, I was carried to the door and thrown out like a dead cat, clear across the road on which the schoolhouse faced, and the door was slammed behind me. In a moment it was reopened and out sailed my hat, the same old big man's hat. In the sting of disgraceful and overwhelming defeat I didn't know that I was hurt until half way to Veedersburg, a mile and a half distant, whither I had started with a vague idea of sending an officer to re-

dress my wrongs. Then I found that my right eyelid was turned completely under, causing a good deal of pain, and that I was pretty well bruised and bumped from top to toe. I succeeded in pulling the eyelid out from under and sat down to bathe such parts as I could in the little stream called Cole creek, half way between the two towns. I decided not to send the teacher to jail, she being only an old maid, and loafed in the woods along the banks until noon, when I sneaked back to the schoolhouse and ate my dinner; and for the rest of that day, and for the rest of that term, I was a most exemplary little boy. The teacher never referred to the subject in my presence. That evening, though, she threw me into a panic by announcing her intention of going home with me to spend the night, inasmuch as the weather looked stormy and Kittie had often asked her to come and stay all night in bad weather, the Jack home being much farther away.

So, with downcast eyes and most dismal forebodings, I walked meekly beside her, running the gauntlet of boyish grins and an occasional sly poke in the ribs to make me see the joke. Of course I knew that the real reason for the inopportune visit was the desire to tell her story first—a good idea, too, but who would have expected an old maid teacher to think it up! Not a word was said about my attempted feat of valor until after I had gone to bed and to sleep. I never knew what was said then but have no doubt that, whatever it was, it was told with fairness to me. I heard nothing about it from Kittie for several days, and not then until, unable longer to bear the suspense and uncertainty, I brought up the subject myself. I related the incident, naturally coloring it a little in self defense. She listened patiently and then said. "The teacher does not tell it exactly like you do." Only this and nothing more, and she never did mention the subject to me again. Looking back at this late day I believe that Kittie was too nearly a child herself to take very serious side against me, and that in her secret heart she rather enjoyed the whole escapade. If she told Evans I heard nothing of it. Miss Jack never referred to it in any way, but was always and is yet, my good friend. When,

some seven or eight years afterward, she was about to marry, I was one of the very few taken into her confidence.

A Sugar Camp and New Friends.

The latter part of the winter Evans and Kitty decided to move to Hillsboro and the place was rented to Billy Murphy who, as well as his wife Ellen, was very willing to take me as one of the fixtures. Billy, being a plasterer by trade, was, like Evans, obliged to be away from home a good deal. The farm was in the edge of the old town of Chambersburg and consisted of only forty acres, ten of which were in orchard and five in timber. I believe that no more than fifteen acres were actually in cultivation and this portion was planted to corn, so that the real farm work did not require very much time. I spent a good deal of time in the timber with another boy, cutting felled trees into sawlogs and the tops into firewood. It was, I think, the most pleasant work I ever did. In the latter part of February I helped Billy in a rented sugar camp, hauling sugar water from the trees to the furnace and dipping it from one kettle to another in the process of making maple syrup. This, too, was pleasant work and I had to help me, the same boy, George Trinkle, a brother of Mrs. Murphy, or Ellen, as we called her. By the way, he and Ellen were my second cousins and they had a younger brother, Chris, and a sister, Sallie. All of us were the best of friends. I was frequently allowed to stay all night with the two boys and they with me. While we sometimes had our boyish quarrels we were inseparable most of the time, and they hold a very warm place in my affections today. George is said to be a successful preacher in the United Brethren church some where in Indiana, and I hope to have the pleasure of hearing him before I die. I promise to be good and not spoil his sermon by calling to his mind any of the little capers that I remember so well. I am not so sure that I should not remind him of some of them when we were alone together, that is, if he has not become too dignified to admit of such a thing, which I regard as highly improbable.

I stayed with the Murphy's until some time the next winter. In the main they were very good to me—especially Billy, who was always just and always took into consideration that I was only a boy. But Ellen did something just before I left, that in spite of her other kindnesses to me, I am sorry to say I have never been able quite to forgive. She has been dead a good many years and, I hope, in Heaven, but I cannot even at this distance of time call up her memory without a feeling of bitterness. We bought butter of a Mrs. Keeling, about a half mile distant. The price had been twenty-five cents a pound for some time, but on this particular day Mrs. Keeling informed me that it had fallen to twenty cents, and gave me a nickel in change, which I put into my pocket and completely forgot. I was much puzzled a few days later on finding the money. I had probably not put my hand in the pocket before since placing the nickel there, for I never had any money, or even a knife. At once I went to Ellen with my discovery and asked if she knew how I came by the nickel. I remember a feeling of happy anticipation that I should find she had placed it there as a surprise present. She disclaimed all knowledge of it, and after a vain effort to recollect any transaction connected with a nickel, I gave it to her, knowing that it could not by any possibility be mine. That evening, as the three of us, together with a Mr. Brown, who was there for the night, were playing dominoes, she stopped the game and told the story in this wise: "Isie thought he was pretty cute the other day. I sent him for a pound of butter with a quarter and Mrs. Keeling gave him a nickel back because the price had come down. He thought I wouldn't know anything about it so he stuck the nickel in his jeans. He has been talking about that magic-lantern show in Veedersburg ever since they threw the bills around, but he got to thinking I might catch him at it so he made a wonderful find in his pocket today. He couldn't imagine where it came from."

I cannot give in writing any conception of the tone of cold sarcasm in which this was told, nor of the feelings of the boy who sat there, white as the dead, as he was afterwards told, too stunned to utter a sound while the awful words went, poke, poke, into his heart, like a long jagged

knife, until he fell unconscious to the floor. Some time that night Billy came softly to my bed, put his arm over me, and whispered, "be quiet, I know you wouldn't steal a nickel to save your life." Big, rough, bewhiskered, kindly Billy; may God bless you, wherever you are! I hugged him and for the first time since the blow fell was able to cry.

I left early the next morning and never saw Ellen again until she was dying nearly two years afterwards. She sent for me and as she reached her poor dying hand to me and smiled, I forgot for the moment my bitterness. She said, "I am glad you came, I always liked you." Whether she had meant to speak of the nickel incident or not I never knew. She was very weak and said no more. I know I ought to have forgiven and forgotten freely long ago. There are some impressions so deeply sunken into our hearts, however, that they cannot be erased by a mere effort of the will, nor even by the knowledge that they ought not be retained.

With one exception this was the only time I was ever accused of dishonesty. The other occasion was when I was clerking in John Latta's boot and shoe store in Attica, in 1876. I was fifteen years old and had been working there several months. The shoe store took up one side of the room, the other being occupied by a Mr. Haller, with a hat and gent's furnishing store. The two men helped each other back and forth as occasion arose. One evening Mr. Latta went to a lodge meeting leaving the store in Mr. Haller's charge. About nine o'clock he returned and soon went to the cash drawer to count the money. Presently he called me and said that a dollar was missing. Mr. Haller had already told him that no money had been taken in during his absence, as was not infrequently the case after suppertime. I knew nothing of any money having been taken from the drawer, neither did Mr. Haller. Mr. Latta said to me, "there is no use talking, there were twenty-nine dollars in this drawer when I went to lodge and now there are twenty-eight. I know Mr. Haller did not take it and you were the only other one here." Mr. Haller was quite sure that I had not been to the drawer and thought a mistake had been made in the count, but Mr. Latta was equally certain that a dollar was gone and that I had taken it. I came back to the store the

next morning feeling very miserable and not knowing what to do. I felt that I could not leave until something had happended to make Mr. Latta see his mistake, and I could not by any possibility imagine a way in which it was to happen. As I was cleaning the store a thought flashed into my mind that nearly paralyzed me. I dropped the broom and falling into a chair began to cry hysterically, "I know where the dollar is! I know where the dollar is!" Mr. Haller came and put his hand on my back, saying kindly, "Where is it, Isie?" "Why, don't you know, you gave it to Billy Rhodes when he brought back the baby's shoes last night?" He remembered the transaction perfectly and was as glad as I was. When we told Mr. Latta upon his arrival he merely said, "Well, that accounts for it then." He was satisfied, since it turned out that he had not lost a dollar, after all, and gave no thought to the long sleepless night of torture I had undergone.

I believe these two incidents of my early life have influenced me more than anything else to be kind and entirely just to every boy, and to be most careful not unnecessarily to wound their feelings. I should a great deal rather lose something occasionally than take the chance of wrongfully accusing one.

Early Experiences as a Cook

From Murphy's I went to my cousin, Joe Blackburn, in Veedersburg. He was a bachelor of about forty and conducted a barber shop, eating and sleeping in the same building. I went to him because I knew he would take me in until I could find another place to live. He gave me a pair of his boots of which I stood much in need, my feet being badly frostbitten from having had only an old ragged pair of woman's cloth gaiters. He made room for me to sleep by pulling his lounge a few inches away from the wall and stuffing the space with some old clothing. It made a very narrow bed, indeed, for the two of us, but it was very welcome to me; and he was good enough to pretend that he had lots of room, that he preferred a narrow place to sleep, made

him feel better to have to lie straight, etc. He did and said everything to make me feel welcome and that I was really doing him a favor by staying there. He taught me to make coffee, boil and stew potatoes and cook eggs in various ways. Also, we had an occasional beefsteak, or piece of liver which I could burn all the taste out of like a regular cafe cook. I think I have never known even a high-priced chef who could quite equal the meals I set up in those days, in absolute lack of all semblance of human food. My garbage disposal plant was quite simple and effective. The small building projected back into a hill and the window sill of the kitchen was just flush with the ground which sloped steeply upward from it. All I had to do was to raise the window and throw out my potato peelings and such like, being careful to close the sash quickly to prevent their immediate return to the kitchen.

Learning to Smoke as a Manly Art.

In about a month I found a place to stay with a widow, a Mrs. Wilt. She was very poor and washed for a living. I helped her with the work and she seemed to think that I earned my board. She was married in a few weeks to a one-legged man who had a pension and I was sent by my father to live with a family by the name of Pickett. The family consisted of an old lady, a widowed daughter with a baby, two single daughters and two young boys—one a grandson. The whole outfit smoked pipes and there must have been at least a dozen pipes of one kind and another about the place. I soon learned to smoke with the best of them. They lived on a pension, and twenty dollars a month which they received for pumping water into the railroad water tank with a horse-power. This became my job, and as I sat on the beam, going round and round behind the old blind horse, smoking a pipe as big as life, I am not sure that I would have exchanged places with the president—certainly not with a much smaller official. In the summer the whole family were stricken with typhoid fever, I with the rest. My father had me removed to the home of Bill Blackburn, Joe's older brother, who owed him a large bill for medical services and was willing to care

for me in payment of the debt. Both Bill and his wife Mattie, were more than kind. They had four small children of their own and lived in a house of but two rooms, but they did as well as they could for me. After about seven weeks I was able to sit up though it was a very long time before I was strong again. Mattie, to keep me from feeling dependent and in the way, got some yarn and let me knit some socks, pretending that it was a very great help to her. My mother had taught me to knit during one of my sick spells, but Mattie showed me how to turn a heel and narrow off the toe. It seemed to me that I should never get enough to eat after I was able to get about. Raw turnips, apples, green or ripe, cabbage stalks, calamus roots, raw sweet potatoes, everything obtainable that could possibly be chewed and swallowed —were requisitioned between meals in the futile attempt to correct the irreducible vacuum just south of my neck. It may be that so heavy and varied a diet was not good for me in my weak condition but it certainly seemed good, and if it did me any harm I was not aware of it. The only exception was when I ate about a quart of cold beans which soon picked a quarrel with the heterogenous society in my stomach and departed in a huff, much regretted.

The Pickett family all recovered with the exception of the widowed daughter and her baby, both of whom died.

Experiences as a Hotel Employee.

For the next few months I led a varied existence, not being able to work much and eating a great deal, so that my services were not in active demand.

In the late fall I was sent for by Mrs. Whittier, landlady of the only hotel in Veedersburg. I had never spoken to her and had only seen her at a distance, but considered her, as indeed she was, a lady of more than ordinary refinement. Therefore I went to her full of wonder and with a wild hope in my heart that she would let me work for her. I waited in the office until she came, very much frightened, and toward the last very much discouraged. I tried to nerve myself to the disappointment of finding that she merely

wanted me to perform some errand for a nickel or dime. When she finally came in she sat down beside me, put her arm around me and in the kindest of tones apologized for the delay. She said she had noticed me a good many times, that I had seemed different from most other boys she had observed, always going quietly about what I had to do, never using boisterous language, etc. That she wanted a boy to help in the hotel and believed I would be a good boy for her. All this, and more, she said in such a kindly way, while she looked into my eyes with such a motherly air that I thought she was the grandest lady I had ever seen since my mother died, and I loved her. I immediately entered her service, or, rather, her household, for she treated me as her own. She at once made me some warm clothing, bought me a pair of boots and a cap, and, to complete my joy and pride, a nice pair of warm gloves. She cut my hair with her own hands, kissed me for looking so nice when the operation was over, and in every way acted toward me like a real mother. She required me to work, just as I imagine she would have required a boy of her own to do. There was no mention of wages but she saw to it that I always had a dime or two in my pocket. I learned to help wait on the tables, bake pancakes, fry eggs, etc., and also sometimes washed and dried dishes, though Mrs. Whittier did not allow me to clean the cooking utensils. The head waiter, who also helped with the other work, once put me to washing the pots and skillets and went in to sit down and chat with Mrs. Whittier, as any of us were free to do after our work was done. In a very few minutes she returned, took the cloth and said the landlady wanted me. As I entered her room she invited me to sit down and gave me the stereoscope and views to look at. I learned afterward that she had called the girl by her surname (a thing she never did except when greatly provoked), sent her back to do the dirty cleaning [redacted] given her unmistakably to understand that such work was not again to be put upon me. In the latter part of the winter Mrs. Whittier went to Attica and bought me a nice suit of clothes with a long tail coat, such as boys of my age wore for best at that time. Soon afterward she gave a party, engaged a girl for me and made me

go and bring her—my very first experience. She brushed my hair, fixed my necktie, squirted a little perfume on me from her atomizer, and with many instructions started me out, telling me that I was fit to call on the queen's daughter.

It was during the winter with her that I joined the Christian church. She took me to the creek for baptism and waited for me with warm wraps. I was heartbroken when they sold the hotel in the spring and went to another part of the state where I could not go. Some years afterward she came into my little store in Veedersburg. I was nineteen then, but she pulled me across the counter and kissed me. Mr. Whittier had died and left her, I think in very moderate circumstances. She, herself, died soon after that visit, in her home in Southern Indiana.

I was engaged by the new landlord at two dollars a week with board and washing. I was also allowed to accept tips for carrying satchels, etc., which amounted to perhaps fifty cents a week. Mr. and Mrs. Hatfield, the new landlord and landlady, were entirely fair and just with me, but I much missed the mothering of Mrs. Whittier. It was during my stay with the Hatfields that I had the following adventure: A man had been found unconscious on the railroad track a few miles west of Veedersburg and brought to the hotel. He had been struck by a night train, but the physicians had some reasons for believing that he had been shot in the back and laid on the track. He was a stranger and, so far as I know, was never identified. He was kept on a cot in the office until he died a few days later without having regained consciousness, when the body was removed to a room on the second floor. I did not know which room it was placed in but it was number nine, one of the best guest rooms. The attending physicians telegraphed the coroner at the county seat who wired in answer that he could not come, and instructed them to make such autopsy as they considered advisable. About nine o'clock, however, he again telegraphed them to await his arrival on the three o'clock morning train. Accordingly they ceased operations and went home to get what sleep they could before train time, very carelessly leaving the door unlocked. Mr. Hatfield wishing to attend a lecture, marked each guest's room on the register

and left me to show them to bed. In his hurry he unthinkingly marked one guest for number nine. This man was a stranger from New York, who was on the way home from a trip through Southern Kansas, in the interest of some syndicate. He was the most nervous man I ever saw and walked the floor continuously, only stopping occasionally to recount some of the terrible things he had seen or heard about in the west. The story of the Bender murders seemed to have an especial hold on his mind and he frequently referred to them. He could not make up his mind to retire until after all the other guests had gone to their rooms, when he finally decided to take the chance. I got his number from the register, lit the little hand lamp, took one of his valises and piloted him up to number nine, he following with the other valise. The sight that confronted us as we entered the room was enough to upset any man, to say nothing of one whose nerves were already so unstrung. The body was entirely uncovered and the immense unclosed eyes were staring directly at us. A section of back bone some eight inches long, lay on one wooden chair, a considerable portion of the internal economy on another. Horribly shaking myself, I turned to reassure the stranger, but he was too quick. With a tremendous yell he was out of the room and down the stairs in a shorter time than I could have believed possible. If he touched bottom more than three times in his wild flight down those twenty steps I did not hear it. When I got down (and, between you and me, my own gait was not a model of inactivity), he was standing in the outer office door, trembling like an aspen leaf and reaching for the satchel I carried. I tried to explain but I might as well saved myself the trouble, for he did not seem to hear me. Grabbing the valise he put out into as dark and stormy a night as I ever saw. I saw him no more, and suppose he went into hiding some where until the train came that brought the coroner, and boarded it with a thankful heart for his escape from such awful and imminent peril in the wild west. I have often thought it would be interesting to know how he tells the harrowing tale to his wondering grandchildren. I was a little uneasy lest the landlord should blame me for the loss of a guest, but there was no cause for alarm. While he was

not quite pleased, judging by his observations on the subject, the uncomplimentary terms were all directed, not at me, but at the New York man and his folks, and all other men of like tendencies, and their folks.

Entering the Mercantile Business.

After a few weeks with Mr. Hatfield I was sent for by Mr. Latta of Attica, who had in some way heard of me and thought I might be a good boy for his needs in the boot and shoe store. I was engaged at five dollars a week, my wages to be increased at the end of a month if he still wanted me. I stayed eight months but he always put off the promised raise on some pretext. My board cost three dollars and fifty cents a week and my washing twenty cents. To get board at that price I had to eat eight blocks away from the store. As Mr. Latta allowed me only twenty minutes for dinner and the same time for supper, I had to make tracks at a lively rate and almost swallow my food without chewing. At the end of the eight months I was very much in need of clothing, with no money to buy them with. I tried to economize by renting a room at a dollar a week and eating bakery stuff. I would buy a loaf of bread and a bunch of radishes or onions, sneak them up to my room, eat what I wanted and hide the rest in my trunk for the next meal. But I had not made due allowance for feminine curiosity. My trunk was a cheap one with a broken lock and the chambermaids soon discovered my secret. After that I could hear them whispering and snickering outside the door as they took turns in watching my elaborate meals through the keyhole. This, taken in connection with the inadequacy of the diet to the needs of a growing boy, was very discouraging, and after a week I gave it up. A wonderful circular had fallen into my hands, telling how I could make $350 a month by taking the agency for a patent lamp burner which was an absolute guarantee against explosion of the kerosene in case of an accident. I could easily sell several thousand of the burners each month—the public presumably waiting with bated breath and open pocketbooks for a chance to acquire so great

a boon—and make twenty cents on each and every sale. I decided to make the easy money before somebody else discovered the golden opportunity, and got in ahead of me. I notified Mr. Latta of my intended departure but did not tell him of the rare good forunte that had fallen my way, or was just about to. He offered me seven dollars a week to remain with him, but what was that to $350 a month? I stayed two weeks to give him time to replace me and started out on my expedition as a Napoleon of finance. I had enough money to order one burner for a sample, and to take me to Chambersburg. I engaged board with Mrs. Bet Dixon, not doubting that I should soon be able not only to pay her, but to make her a handsome present besides. She was very good to me and I don't much believe she expected me to pay her anything, for when, some months afterward, I was able to pay her and offered to do so, she refused to take anything, saying that "Uncle Mose" (my father) had always doctored them without charge and this was the first chance she had had to do anything in return. She mended my clothes and fixed me up as well as she could, even contriving a pair of drawers out of the lining of some old trousers of her husband's. She ordered one of the burners. Billy Murphy, then living with his second wife, ordered one, Joe Blackburn five and the Methodist minister one. That was the sum total of my orders. Not another soul would even give the burner a serious look. And, anyway, I was obliged to abandon the vast enterprise by the discovery that the article was a fraud; as good as a common lamp burner, but no better—and a common lamp burner could be had for fifteen cents. I gave the sample to Mrs. Dixon and went to work for a farmer who made extra money during the winter by sawing felled trees into lengths with a drag-saw. It was operated by horse power and my job was to drive the horses. I was to have ten dollars a month, but a couple of days before the month was up Mr. Hatfield, having heard that I had left Attica, sent for me to come back to the hotel, and I went. The farmer would not pay me a cent, holding that a contract at so much a month involved no obligation to pay anything, unless a month had been worked.

In a few weeks I was offered a place to work in Mr. Han-

cock's drug store, and I have followed that business ever since, with the exception of nearly two years on the farm in Kansas. I received eight dollars a month and my board and washing for two years, when my pay was raised to fifteen dollars, with board and washing. About three months later Mr. Hancock sold out and I went to work for Mr. Miller at a little better wage—that is, four dollars a week and my board and washing. I was not very well satisfied with this position, since the store did a large liquor business. In the fall Mr. Miller was threatened with indictment by the grand jury and I left his service. While in his employ I slept in the store and was provided with an old ball and powder revolver, about a foot long, for protection. I was horribly afraid of it and nothing could have induced me to fire it.

Visiting Sister Ida in Nebraska.

Taking advantage of my being out of employment and of having a little money saved up, I went to Nebraska to visit my sister Ida, whom I had not seen since our mother's burial, more than seven years before. She had been my chief playmate in our childhood, and the separation had been very hard for both of us. We had very few playthings but made the most of what we did have. Some old broom sticks for horses, cobs to make houses, and bags of shelled corn for balls, were quite as satisfactory as more expensive things would have been. Ida used to try to ride like a lady, sidewise, but the peculiar breed of horses we had were very hard to manage in that way, so she oftener rode like her brother—clothes-pin-fashion. A new family came into our neighborhood, consisting of a Mrs. Sargent and two little boys of about our age. The mother was a music teacher. They were English people and evidently had been in much better circumstances. The boys were the most perfect little gentlemen, and were always neat and well dressed. The mother seemed to be of ultra-fashionable tendencies, attended late balls, laced to the last possible degree, and wore what seemed to us an endless variety of very fine apparel. We saw the boys going by and wished very much to scrape an acquaintance with them, but supposed they were so far above our class

that they would not deign to play with us. Finally we entered into a conspiracy to make them want to know us. By "we" I mean Ida and myself. We would watch until we saw them coming, then get very busy with our stick horses and cob houses, being careful to be playing near the fence, and very ostentatiously merry as the boys went by. They really did look wistfully at us but did not stop. Our next move was to ask our mother to let us invite them over to spend the day. This seemed to us a very bold thing to do, as well as, in all probability, a hopeless thing. But our mother, always hospitable, especially to children, and knowing them better than we did, gave us willing permission, not doubting that they would be glad to come. And so it was. The little lonesome fellows were delighted and they and their mother thanked us in the most polite way. They were promptly on hand and we had a wonderful day. They entered heartily into our crude games and enjoyed them as fully as we did. Our dinner menu was made up of the remains of a turkey, with what was left of dumplings and gravy. They ate as though they had never tasted such delicious food and after the gravy was gone, sat and ate slice after slice of the home made bread. I believe I have never seen two boys as thoroughly enjoy a meal. We learned afterward that they were accustomed to eating only bakery stuff—baker's bread, cookies, crackers, etc. The mother would be gone all day at her work of teaching music, and at night to parties, and did no cooking except to boil some eggs. After that the boys frequently played and ate with us, and sometimes we would go and eat with them, their bakery diet making an enjoyable variety for us.

I found Ida a big thirteen-year-old girl, but believe I should have known her, for she had not changed in appearance except as to size. We spent a most happy month together.

On the occasion of this visit I met for the first time my mother's half-brother, Charles H. Getchell, of Memphis, Tenn., who was spending the summer and fall with Aunt Mary. This was in 1879. His family, consisting of wife and two grown daughters, had all fallen victims to the dreadful plague of yellow fever the year before and he was much

broken in health and nerves. It was not uncommon for him to faint while recalling the scenes of his awful affliction. He returned to Memphis that fall and I have heard from him but once since. He wrote me the next summer proposing to help me start in business. I had already started, however, thanks to my good friends in Veedersburg, and so informed him, thanking him most sincerely for the offer. I received no reply and it may be that he was offended because I had been able to set up for myself without his assistance.

Just now I am reminded of a singular incident in the life of my mother's sister, Aunt Mary. She and my mother had five half-brothers—Charles, Sumner, Louis, Otis and Frank. Frank, the youngest, was an especial favorite with Aunt Mary. He with Louis and Otis went as volunteers in the Northern army and all were killed. One night Aunt Mary went into the coal house at her home in Illinois to replenish the bucket. It was quite dark and she was filling the hod by picking up chunks without seeing them. Suddenly the coal house was lit by a very bright light and after a moment she saw her brother Frank gazing upon her with a most loving expression. As she told it, it was not like a picture but the real living brother who looked at her and seemed to want to speak. The vision lasted but a moment and the room was as dark as ever. She hastened into the house and told her husband, Uncle William. In about a month they received word that her brother Frank had been killed in battle, or rather, had been wounded in battle and had died as nearly as they could ascertain within a few minutes of the time she saw the vision. Both Aunt Mary and Uncle William were very orthodox Presbyterians and among the last I should believe capable of any superstition, but to the end of their lives they both firmly believed that for a fleeting moment the bonds of love had prevailed over the bonds of death, and in the supreme transition the "baby brother" had been permitted to appear to the loving sister. I think no one who knows me would accuse me of superstitious tendencies, yet, knowing my aunt and uncle as I did, I, too, believe that in the darkness of the coal house that night Aunt Mary saw her dead or dying brother.

Going in Business for Myself.

I went back to Veedersburg to engage with Mr. Rosenbarger, who owned the old Hancock store. He agreed to pay me $22.00 a month, with board and washing, for the winter, and $25.00 when the spring business began—an unheard of wage for a country drug store clerk in those times and those parts. When the time came for the enormous increase he decided that he could not justify himself in paying such an extravagant salary, and on my refusal to work for less he organized a "combination in restraint of trade." That is, he got the proprietors of the other two drug stores into a secret agreement not to offer me more than $20.00 and my keep, in case I declined that offer from him. Mr. Miller had already offered me $25.00, and I felt safe in refusing the reduced salary, only to find to my surprise that all previous quotations were withdrawn, and all were making the same offer. I refused to work for any of them and for a few weeks was out of employment. Then some good friends lent me $500.00 to start a store of my own, which I did, of course on a small scale. A wholesale house in Indianapolis furnished me with about $1,000 worth of goods, taking $400 down and trusting me for the balance. I retained $100 to fix up the room and pay current expenses. At that time the regular terms on drugs was sixty days, but the firm gave me permission to take whatever time was necessary. Fortunately, my business was so good from the start, and I was so careful of my expenses, that no part of the debt was allowed to become overdue, and in three years I had paid off the note for the loan and owed no money to anyone. My health, however, was much broken by the close application to the work and the strain of the responsibility.

I was barely nineteen when I opened the store in May, 1880. The owners of the other three stores had made what effort they could to prevent my starting in business. They telegraphed the wholesale firm, threatening to withdraw their patronage if I were supplied with goods. The dispatch was

handed to the proprietor while I sat by his desk. He smiled and handed it to me. It read as follows: "Sell no goods to anyone from this place if you wish our trade, Fowler in particular." It was dated at Veedersburg, May 15, 1880, and signed McClelland & Goodin, J. Rosenbarger, F. H. Miller. Miller.

I was very much alarmed and all my hopes seemed suddenly to have vanished, leaving me in worse state than ever, for I had already spent part of the $500. When I could gather nerve enough I said, "I suppose that settles my getting any goods." Mr. Barry gave a little friendly laugh, crumpled up the yellow paper and dropped it into the waste basket, "My boy," he said, "If I had any doubts before as to the wisdom of helping you, I have none now. From now on no one in Veedersburg but you can buy goods from us, and you can buy all you see fit to order." And he made his words good. No traveling man from the firm of Stewart & Barry ever called on any of the other firms again. Mr. Barry rescued the telegram from the waste basket and gave it to me for a souvenir. I kept it a long time and then destroyed it. I had thought of using it in my opening advertisements and actually had some announcements printed which embodied it, but was persuaded to abandon the idea by friends wiser than I. I have always been glad of it, for all the signers of the telegram were afterward my good friends, as they had always been before. All of them abandoned the drug business within a year, and all became my customers. Mr. Miller was clerking for me when I sold out in the fall of 1883, having become seriously alarmed about my health. I had a little more than $1,600 clear to show for my forty months in business.

Death of Father.

My father had died in the winter of 1881. He had been stricken with paralysis, first of the left side, then of the right and, finally, the day before his death, of his head. He lay about seven weeks, helpless. From the time of the first attack he was not able to make his wants known, owing to

his brain, or some part of it, being involved. He talked a great deal but to no purpose, as the words he said were entirely different from, and bore no relation to, the thoughts he was trying to make known. I think his mind was tolerably clear, at least a part of the time, during the first three weeks, and once in a while—perhaps a half dozen times in that period—he managed to say a sentence or two that intelligently conveyed his meaning. Realizing from the first that he could not recover I wrote to his only living brother, Joseph Fowler, of Kirksville, Mo. He replied at once, in a long and affectionate letter, expressing his great regret that his age and infirmities would not allow him to come to the bedside of his stricken brother. He especially deplored the fact that a quarrel had enstranged them many years before and that they had not written a line to each other since. He begged me to make known to my father, if possible, his brotherly love and sympathy, and his sorrow for the lost years. All this I read to my father several times and it made a deep impression on him, and seemed to weigh on his mind. Several times he said, "oh, this trouble, all on account of a quarrel with my brother!" After the second stroke which took his right side he said nothing that could be understood, until the morning before he died in the night. I had a man to nurse him every day and every other night, I taking the alternate nights, and, of course, being with him from time to time during the day. When I went in to him that morning it was plain to see that he was nearly through his suffering. A third stroke had taken his head, leaving him power to move only his big intelligent eyes. They were turned toward the door, evidently watching for me. When I came in they brightened with a most loving expression which turned to one of earnest wishfulness and I saw that he very much wanted to say something to me. I kissed him, lifted the poor dying head in my arms, and talked to him, in the hope that he might understand, though he could not reply. The look of wishfulness became more intense—almost agonized—and I saw that he was making an extreme effort to speak. After several moments he evidently gave it up, but managed to say, with a last supreme struggle, "I can't make it." He said no more, nor did his

eyes again show understanding, and that night he was released from his sufferings.

Had it not been for the blight of drink he would have been in every way a good and useful man; indeed, he was by nature a kind-hearted and broad-minded man, and endowed with more than ordinary ability. For several years preceding his death he drank only occasionally, and was considered by many as the most able physician in and about Veedersburg. I have known many instances when he would send the poor tired mother and father to bed, and walk the floor all night with the suffering little one in his arms, administering the remedies and attending to all the duties of a tender nurse himself. I have known other instances when a father would find him in his office in an intoxicated condition, and would take him to his home, get him to bed, and wait until he slept off the effects of the liquor, rather than risk any other physician, so great was the confidence in his skill and knowledge. He was born in Garrard county, Kentucky. Being left an orphan at the age of about eleven, he was taken by his uncle, Moses Hinds, who, with a number of other southern people, soon afterward colonized a considerable portion of Fountain county, Indiana, where my father spent the rest of his life. He fought in both the Mexican and Civil wars. Though wounded in both wars he declined a pension, and even in his later days, when his health was much broken, there was no surer way of incurring his displeasure than to suggest the subject to him. He was not unfavorable to the granting of pensions to others however, and assisted many to obtain them. He had honorable discharges from both wars.

Removal to Kansas and Marriage.

I came to Kansas in the spring of 1884 and bought the little farm in Drum Creek township with which you are all familiar. As an investment it was a complete failure, but the two years outdoor life and work and the freedom from heavy responsibility gave me back my health and strength completely. In February of 1885 I went to Ohio and married

your mother, than whom a nobler woman never trod God's footstool. I am lost in wonder yet, that she should have consented to leave her home and host of friends and come to a strange part of the country with me, who had so little to offer her. Yet she always said that never for a moment had she regretted doing so. We lived in the two-room house and had by way of housekeeping outfit two bedsteads, costing two dollars and fifty cents each, two mattresses costing the same amount, a cook stove costing twenty-one dollars, six plates and six cups and saucers, all of white earthen ware, a few cheap knives and forks and a few better pieces of tableware which had been given us as wedding presents; notably—some plated knives, forks and spoons, and a plated caster. Also, we had a beautiful rag carpet, a feather bed and plenty of bedding, all of which your mother had made, or helped to make. Yes, and we had a folding leaf table and the organ her parents had given her nearly a year before, on her twenty-first birthday. I made a cupboard out of the box the organ had been shipped in. I could not make doors so your mother contrived curtains for it, and we thought it a very nice cupboard. We had red tablecloths for ordinary use and one nice white one for extra. I thought no man ever had so pleasant a home. I had rented the farm to George Rogers, agreeing to give him a third of the crop and board him. I helped him in such way as I could with my poor team, made garden, and worked a few acres that had been reserved. The crop was poor and would hardly have furnished a living through the winter. Fortunately, I was given the district school to teach, at thirty-five dollars a month for six months, and that tided us over. In the spring I rented the place to the same man, he having just been married, and engaged to work in Mr. J. H. Pugh's drug store, in Independence. He took me on a month's trial and I worked for him more than nine years, when I resigned to engage in business for myself.

Our Baby Girl

Naomi was about six weeks old when we came to town, and was, I thought, the most wonderful baby that ever existed. I ate every meal with her in my arms and divided the time between taking bites and contemplating what was to me her wondrous beauty. She, in turn, rarely took her eyes from me, and seemed on the whole well satisfied with her choice of father. In September your great-grandmother Coder was near her death from cancer and I sent the baby and her mamma back to Ohio, to be with her in her last days. This was made possible by an opportune excursion to Indianapolis at a low rate for the round trip—twenty dollars, I believe. During their absence I wrote a letter every day, which your uncle Emerson jokingly called a daily edition, with Sunday supplement. The ticket was good for only a month, so they had to come home before the good old lady's death which occurred a few weeks afterward. I cannot tell how happy I was as I grabbed the baby almost before your mother had reached the platform. And both mother and baby were happy, too. At the time they left we had expected to return to the farm. Mr. Pugh was only paying me forty dollars a month and I was offered thirty-eight to come back and teach the same school that winter, which would be better than the forty dollars in town with nine dollars rent to pay. I had told Mr. Pugh of my intention and had already sent our goods to the farm. A young man had been engaged to take my place in the store and everything seemed settled. After the goods were gone to the farm Mr. Pugh urged me to stay, offering me fifty dollars a month, which was about the highest salary then paid to drug clerks. He would retain the new man, but I would be head clerk and in charge whenever Mr. Pugh was absent, which was quite often. I agreed to stay provided I could find a satisfactory man to take the school, which was done.

Buying the Home in Independence.

To make things more sure Mr. Pugh induced me to buy the house we have lived in ever since, he furnishing the necessary money to handle the deal. The price was $1,350, and there was a mortgage of $1,000 with nearly five years to run. Mr. Pugh advanced the $350, agreeing to give me whatever time was necessary to pay it in. That was twenty-eight years ago this fall. Harry and Frank were born in the house, your Mother died there, and none of us had any other home since until you children married and made your own. The only exception is that Frank lived with his grandparents about three years, after the death of your mother. The rest of my own history you know.

Home Life.

Naomi was a little over six months old when her mamma brought her home from Ohio. We had given her the name of Sarah soon after her birth, that being the name of both her grandparents. To please her dying great-grandmother we added her own name, Naomi, still with the full intention of calling our daughter "Sarah." The question was decided by the daughter herself, who, as soon as she could talk, called herself "Noma" and would answer to no other name but that and "Baby." So, for a good while, "Nōma" it was. In fact, she never acquired the full name until Harry was old enough to talk, when he called her "Naomi" with much precision, and we gradually followed his lead in the matter. Naomi was always her father's own baby, and even at a few months old would reach her arms and cry whenever I left the house. After she could walk she always came to meet me when the weather would allow, and reached her arms to be taken and carried to the house. Her mamma would have the meal all ready and then the two would watch for my coming and go a little way to meet me. After Harry came there were three to

meet me, and after Frank's advent, four. I thought, and still think, that no man was ever blessed with a more lovely family. One evening your mamma had told Naomi that she must not ask papa to take her this evening, for he would be very tired. She had promised that she wouldn't and she didn't. She just squared herself in front of me, reached up her arms and said, "Oh, I am so tired." Of course I picked her up, not knowing what her mamma had told her. Her mamma said, "Naomi." Naomi replied in an injured tone, "I didn't ask him to take me; mamma, I didn't." When she was big enough to sit at the table alone we bought her the tall red chair that we still have. She sat at my right hand. When Harry was old enough, he usurped the chair and the place at my right hand and Naomi moved to my left in a new chair, not quite so high. When Frank was big enough he routed Harry, who routed Naomi, who moved one place south. All were well-behaved at the table, and elsewhere—at least, I thought so.

Naomi's favorite meal was crackers and milk with a little sugar, but she always wanted some of whatever the rest of us ate put upon her plate. That ceremony gone through, she would contentedly eat her "crockers-and-milk," as she called it, hardly tasting the other food. Harry's diet consisted largely of milk, of which he would drink several mugfuls at each meal. Like Naomi, however, he wanted a supply of the regular food on his plate to look at while he drank his "goo' warm muh" (good warm milk.) One day he had his plate full of potatoes, gravy, meat, and whatever else was on the table, which he was contemplating with much satisfaction while emptying his severalth mug of milk, when Vina said, "Now, Harry, you've got your plate piled full of everything and you won't eat a quarter of it." With a look of mild surprise he detached the mug from his lips, turned toward her and said, in the tone of one who is acquiring useful information, "Won't I?" then calmly resumed the mug. To fully appreciate this incident one must have known the chubby, brown-eyed boy, and his deliberate and earnest way of speaking. Vina most busted herself, laughing. Another time, when he was somewhat older, Vina had made a nice peach cobbler for dinner. We had company, but I cannot recall

at this time who it was. That morning a man had been employed to clean the cistern. Among the interesting souvenirs rescued from the watery depths was about two-thirds of a cat in an extremely dead condition. I think that it was the most surpassingly dead cat I have ever had the pleasure of encountering. At dinner Harry mussed over his cobbler with his spoon, started a bit once or twice to his mouth, and finally said, "I know Vina made this out of that old cat." It may safely be surmised that none of us enjoyed our share of the delicacy quite as fully as though Harry had not spoken. I believe that, to this day, neither Vina nor I ever see or hear of a peach cobbler without thinking of "that old cat."

Frank's favorite food was whatever he could get hold of, and plenty of it. Upon the occasion of his first visit home, however, after he had been with his grandparents a year, he exhibited a pronounced partiality for bread soaked in coffee, which he called "coffee soup." When Harry was about eleven months' old Mr. Pugh gave me a two-weeks' vacation and we went to visit Uncle William and Aunt Mary in Nebraska. Your mamma had never seen them, but knew your Aunt Ida who lived with them, she having visited us while Naomi was a little baby. She and your mamma were the most loving of sisters, and the last writing your mamma ever did was the beginning of a letter to your Aunt Ida. I sent the unfinished letter to her after your mamma's death, and have no doubt she still has it among her most treasured possessions.

I was a little doubtful as to how your mamma and the old folks would like each other, for, as I remembered them, they were very old-fashioned, and held very strict views as to the bringing up and disciplining of children. But my misgivings were entirely without foundation. They loved each other from the start. We had been there but a day or two when your mamma said to me, "Why, what made you think I wouldn't like Aunt Mary? I think she is one of the sweetest old ladies I ever saw." When we started for the depot Aunt Mary, fearful of making a scene, did not accompany us, but gave us good-bye at the gate. I discovered that I had forgotten our traveling cup and returned for it. Aunt Mary was still at the gate, her dear old eyes wet with tears. She said, "Isie, where in all the world could you have gone to find such

a wife?" As for the children, they pried their way into the old hearts at first sight. Naomi was much inclined to loquaciousness, and was willing at all times to exhibit her conversational powers, much to the delight of the old folks and especially of her Aunt Ida, whom she called "Aunt Idoe." A sample; Naomi in the kitchen; "Aunt Maywy, could Noma ahm (have) piece o' cake?" "Yes, in a minute." "A-ah, Noma could ahm piece o' cake in a minute?" and away she would trot to inform the rest of the household of the amazing news; "Noma could ahm piece o' cake in a minute," she confided to each in turn. Looking back at this time I am inclined to think that Naomi deliberately made conversation with the object of practising words she already knew, as well as of learning such new ones as might be offered by the other side. Some time after our return we had, for a few weeks, a girl by the name of Laura Rowley. Naomi called her "Lauro" and was never so happy as when she could inveigle her into an argument. I was sitting in the front room one day when Naomi came dancing in, her face beaming, and reported the latest forensic news. "I talking to Lauro; I say, 'better put your bonnet on, Naomi' Lauro say, 'Oh, no; I don't need any bon-net.' I say, 'Yes, you better put your bonnet on, Naomi.' Lauro say, 'No, I don't need any bon-net.' I say, 'Naomi, if you don't put your bonnet on, I'll tell your mamma.' Lauro say, 'Oh, no; You won't tell my mamma, and I don't need any bon-net'." She was to interested in relating the important debate that she did not notice having reversed the parts and danced out to see what could be done in the way of starting another argument.

Harry, to go back a moment to the Nebraska visit, won his way by his unfailing good humor and his implicit confidence in everyone. He could not yet walk, but crawled about, amusing himself with whatever had been given him, and every little while looking up into somebody's face with such a whole-souled smile that none could resist him. It was also at the time of this visit that Aunt Mary persuaded your mamma to name the expected new baby "Ruth," to match Naomi. Unfortunately for the arrangement, the new baby turned out to be "Frank," who was born the following January. As he made his debut, voicing lusty protest against

the general scheme of things, Dr. Masterman said to Harry, who was lying wide-eyed in his buggy, though it was about eleven o'clock at night, "You're not the boss any more, young man, your brother will help you run things." That was his way of saying, "It's a boy," without saying it. At Harry's birth he had said to your mamma, "Here's your boy." When Naomi was born the nurse said, ostensibly to the vice-nurse, "The nicest girl baby!" There seems to be an unwritten law that the father is to be informed as quickly as possible as to the sex of his new baby, but is, on no account, to be told.

Naomi weighed twelve pounds, by our little spring scale; Harry, ten and a half, and Frank eleven pounds. The actual weight in each case was probably a little less, perhaps a pound. All were fine, healthy babies, to my great relief and joy, for I had known so many born with some deformity or defect that I was fearful. I had the same anxiety and subsequent happiness in the case of my darling grandchild, Nettie Jane. Your mamma soon began to find, to her delight, points of resemblance to me in each new baby, while I, with no less happiness, could see that they were living images of their mother. When Naomi was about seven weeks old her mamma called me to see that the baby was sleeping with her right arm bent over her head, "exactly like you sleep, Isie." As a matter of fact, I almost invariably sleep in that position to this day. In the light of maturer years, however, it seems to me questionable whether Naomi at that tender age, really was paying me the compliment of imitation, though I had no doubt of it at the time. Judging by the affection she has always shown her unworthy father, I make little question but that she would have done it had the thought occurred to her.

A Noble Mother.

I think your mother was one of the noblest women God ever sent to earth. Steadfastly adhering to her religion, and to the church she had chosen in her girlhood, she possessed no element of bigotry or intolerance toward members of other churches, or toward those who held no church member-

ship. Her influence for religion came not from argument or loud-mouthed proclamations, but from her own simple and unassuming life. The minister said, in the course of her funeral sermon, "She did not have to wear a badge proclaiming her a Christian; every one who came in contact with her knew without being told that she was a Christian, of the highest and most Christ-like type." She kept her house in order, ministered to the needs of her husband and children, attended church whenever she could, and contributed without display what she thought she ought to contribute to worthy causes. She had no ambition to be rich or to be regarded as of the elite. She always retained the warmest affection for the old neighbors on the farm and they were sincerely welcome to our home after we moved to town. We usually spent our rare holidays among these good people who had been our first friends and neighbors, hiring a horse for fifty cents and borrowing or renting a buggy. Our nearest neighbor on the farm was Mrs. Clark, and she was almost a mother to the young woman who had married and come so far away from her Ohio home. When your mother was sick she sat by her bed, or did the housework, not as one who confers a favor, but as the merest matter of course. Your mother had a lasting love for this good woman and no more welcome visitor ever came to our house. Mrs. Clark died about a year after your mother was taken. Mr. Clark asked me to select a burial lot and I selected the nearest to your mother's grave. I had erected a modest stone and one just like it was placed by Mr. Clark at the head of his wife's grave.

Our first neighbors in town were Mrs. Harper and her mother, Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Myers and Mrs. St. John. The Harpers and Vaughns moved away years ago, but are our good friends yet. Mrs. Myers and Mrs. St. John and their families seem, to this day, as they always have, like members of our own family. There were many other good friends, and are yet, but none quite fill the place that these do.

Incidents of Your Childhood.

On the whole, all of you children were healthy, though you had from time to time your attacks of sickness. Naomi, had one very serious spell when about a year old. She was delirious for several days and hardly slept at all, talking incessantly, while her bright eyes shone brighter than ever, and her face was hot and red with the fever that seemed to be baffling the doctor. Two whole nights we took turns carrying her on a pillow in our arms, as that seemed to give the only relief to the little suffering brain. I well remember the second night we so carried her. Neither of us slept that night, and my mind and heart were full of thoughts of the awful journey to Mount Hope which, I doubted not, was soon to be taken. I know your mother had the same thoughts though neither of us spoke of it. I had seen many taking that sad and hopeless journey but this was the first time I had realized what it meant. When, the next morning, the little darling fell into a sleep at last, and the doctor announced that the danger was past, your mother and I seemed suddenly stricken with the weakness of children. We dropped together on the lounge and cried for the first time in each others arms.

Naomi was usually very good to take medicine whenever we had to give it to her. In fact, all you children were. I think one reason was that neither of us ever tried to deceive you regarding it, but explained that while it had a bad taste it was to make our nice little girl or boy feel better. Only once did Naomi rebel. She had taken her medicine "like nice lady" until she could not bear the thought of another dose. As often as it was offered she resolutely closed her mouth and whimpered. Once she opened her mouth long enough to say, "I do' want bodo, no," then closed it again and turned over, mouth down. Rather than worry her into a still more nervous condition we allowed the matter to rest a little while, when she again became "nice lady" and willingly swallowed the noxious dose. She called all medicine "bodo"

and got the name from trying to pronounce "bottle," her first medicine having been a liquid. We took the cue from her, and as you know, we still speak of medicine as "bodo" when talking to each other. Another instance of blending ideas with objects occurs to me just now. In some way Naomi got the impression that spoons and forks were the same, and called them both "poons." When her mamma began teaching her to count she invariably started off with "one, two, free, poon," confusing four with fork. She knew all her letters at three years old, and ere she was four knew the first and second readers almost by heart.

I bought her a first reader, thinking she would amuse herself by learning some of the shortest words. When I came to dinner next day her mamma said, "Look at Naomi; she has been just drinking that book all forenoon." Naomi was seated on the lounge, absorbed in the book and oblivious to everything else—even to me, which was most unusual. Occasionally she would look up and ask the name of some word, but that was all. In a month she had read the book through and could relate most of the stories. The second reader soon followed and was mastered in the same way. Before she started to school, in the fall of 1893, she could read ordinary children's books. She was placed in Miss Sanford's room, to her great joy, for Miss Sanford was her Sunday school teacher and a great friend. At the end of the week she came to dinner and I saw that something very serious was the matter. For a time she could not trust herself to answer my inquiry as to what the trouble was. Finally she broke down completely and cried her eyes out on my shoulder. She had been transferred to the second grade, under a teacher she did not know. She was doubly hurt for she considered it a lasting disgrace to be turned out of Miss Sanford's room. I soothed her as well as I could, explaining that she had been promoted to a higher place because she was a good girl and farther advanced than the others in her room; that Miss Londry was a nice teacher, and Miss Sanford would see her every day, etc. In another week she was quite contented and very fond of her new teacher. Indeed, all of you children were always fond of your teachers and I believe they were fond of you. I can

not remember that one of you ever made the slightest complaint of anything your teachers did.

Harry began school at the same time Naomi did, but, of course, was not taken out of the first grade at the same time, he being more than a year younger. I think he remained a year behind her all the way through, including High School. The day before Naomi and Harry started to school we had all arrived home from a visit to your grandparents in Ohio. They had taken Frankie after your mamma died and kept him about three years. He was a year and a half old at the time and for some reason was not well, but very thin and white. I remember that I said to your grandmother, a week after the funeral, "Frankie will not be without his mamma very long." She thought the same thing but had refrained from saying it. I thought I could manage in some way to keep Naomi and Harry with me, but was afraid for Frankie's sake to undertake to keep him, at his tender age and in his puny condition. So, when your grandmother went home, she took him with her. I accompanied them as far as Chicago, where we stayed at the Oxford Hotel until the train went, some time that night. I stayed on the car as long as it was possible for me to stay, believing in my heart that I was taking my last earthly farewell of my lovely baby. Then I stood by the track and watched the train as long as it could be seen, and was conscious of a curious sensation, such as I have never heard or seen described. It was exactly as if the train was attached by some invisible means to my heart, and I could distinctly feel the tugging and stretching, harder and more tearing as the train moved on away from me. When, at last, it disappeared, there was a distinct snap, as though it had finally torn loose, and I staggered backward with the sudden recoil, feeling very weak from the strain. This, no doubt, sounds very foolish but it was as real to me as anything I ever felt.

Frankie grew well and strong under the tender care of his grandparents, and at the end of the three years, with their consent, I brought him home. It was a very great trial to them to give him up and my heart ached for them. But they were most unselfish, and felt, as I did, that it would be better for all the children to grow up together. I had sent

Vina and the two children to visit the folks in Ohio and I went myself, toward the end of their stay, all of us arriving home, as I said, the day before school opened in September, 1893. Vina had been keeping house for us ever since your mamma died, and had become accustomed to caring for the children, so she could manage very well with all three, since Frankie had become well and strong, and was older. It was very hard and lonesome for the poor child, taken away from his loving grandparents and the only home he could remember, especially since the older children were in school a good part of the time. He contrived in various ways to put in the time, and we all gave him special attention in our efforts to keep him from feeling the change too keenly. One day, while the other children were in school, Vina, not feeling well, was lying on the bed in the front bedroom. Frankie had tried all his ways of amusing himself. Finally he came in the room where she was, looking very solemn and dignified, stepped to her side and put a pencil in her mouth, vouchsafing the information that he was the doctor. After examining the pretended thermometer through his imaginary spectacles and feeling her wrist, he gravely announced that she would probably be better in about sixty weeks, and took his dignified departure; to return in a few moments with a broad grin. Before long he was pretty well adjusted to the new conditions, and contented. The next fall he, too, attended school, and in a short time was a schoolboy with the best of them. It was, I think, the second winter when his grandma came for a visit. He was delighted to see her, but said, "You have changed so." I do not know in what way he thought she had changed, but for some reason she did not seem exactly as he remembered her. She had been here but a day or two, though, until they were the same old grandma and Frankie to each other.

I have brought the story up to a point where you can each take it up for yourselves, and shall now recall at random some memories not embodied in the foregoing.

Naomi early learned the useful qualities of cake, and I am not quite sure that she has yet entirely forgotten what it is for. She liked it so well that she called everything she was especially fond of, "cake" or, rather, in her own

peculiar diction, "cay-way-way-way-wike," which she later shortened to "cay-wike." Candy, fruit and eggs were all "cay-wike." Afterward the name was dropped for everything but cake and other good things were called by their own names, as nearly as she could pronounce them. Cherries were "che-wees", berries "be-wees", and, in some way confounding cherry and berry with Harry, she for a time called her brother "He-wees." Neither Naomi nor Harry liked the crust of bread but they had different methods of evading it. Naomi hid, or thought she hid, the crusts under the edge of her plate while Harry simply declined his with the frank statement, "I do' want de huh."

Harry was slower than either Naomi or Frank in learning to talk. I think he could have talked sooner had he possessed the confidence in himself to make the attempt. When we tried to induce him to pronounce a word he would look embarrassed and say "hoh" in a kind of stage whisper. He used this sound to designate anything he wanted to ask for at the table, pointing to the desired object and saying—or, rather, blowing, "hoh." He was a very good natured youngster and had a smile so full of good-fellowship and confidence that it rarely failed to compel one in return. More than once I have seen men and women on the street, passing along with frowns or scowls, or look of distress or anxiety, who would glance at the big little boy, turn back for a better look at the friendly face, return his smile, with or without a word or a pat on his head, and go on their way, apparently thinking pleasanter thoughts. He thought—and thinks yet, for that matter—that no boy ever had quite so wonderful a sister as he. He always listened to her as to an oracle and whatever she said or did was the truest that could possibly be said, and the best that could by any means be done. The two were almost inseparable and hardly knew how to play with any other children. It should be remembered that for three years after their mother's death they were each the other's almost sole child companion, and neither had any conception of a pleasure of any kind that did not include the other. I think it was Naomi's influence, more than anything else, that finally started Harry to talking, and he tried to talk as she did—which was no small undertaking. Once I found them on the back porch with some peanuts I had given them.

Naomi was quite expert in shelling them while Harry was very clumsy, and could hardly manage at all. She saw his wasted efforts and said, "I will fix you some peanuts." He gratefully pushed his sack to her, saying, "Oh, will you fih me hum peanuts, toddle, loddle, lah?" evidently feeling the necessity of a longer sentence than his limited vocabulary would allow, in return for the sisterly offer. In a few moments she had shelled a quantity and pushed them back with, "There, I fixed you some peanuts". With amazed admiration of her skill and dexterity he said, "Oh, did you fih me hum peanuts, toddle, loddle, lah?"

I think the only controversy that ever marred their otherwise perfect accord was over the matter of the size of their feet, both feeling Naomi's superiority by reason of her wearing a size larger shoe. When the boy foot grew faster than the girl ditto and the difference had dwindled to a half-size, there was joyous hopefulness on the one side, and alarm mingled with an entirely assumed show of indifference on the other. When the next re-shoeing time showed that the difference had been wiped out entirely, the exultation of the one and the dismay of the other could not be concealed; and actual tears on the girl's side were the result of the next trip to the shoe store, when it was shown beyond the possibility of doubt that never again would Naomi be able to wear as large a shoe as her brother. Since Harry took to wearing eights on a wide last I have not noticed Naomi crying because she could not have the same, or a larger size. Another evidence of the great healing qualities of time.

Both Naomi and Harry were very glad to have Frankie come home. Naomi often said, "I want Frankie to come home and never go away again." Upon my return from helping your grandma to Chicago I had said that we would see them next summer, intending either to go to Ohio or have them come here. One morning I went in to wake Harry for breakfast. He was not asleep, but lying there with his big eyes full of tears. He tried to smile and said, "Papa, when we hee Glandma and Flankie next hummer, will we hee Mamma, too?" With the wide eyes looking so earnestly and wistfully into mine, and the whole expression showing the tremendous importance of my answer to the little longing

heart, it was very hard to have to tell him the truth. I said, "No, darling; we will see Mamma some time, but I cannot tell when. Some time we will all go where she is, but she cannot come back to us". He did not cry, or make any sound, but lay a little while very quiet, while the full meaning of my words seemed to be coming to him. Then he said wearily, "I do' want any bleakfast, I got a headache, light here." And he put his fat hand over the loving and longing little heart.

Harry could hardly wait for the time to come when he would be four years old. For some weeks before that important day he could hardly talk about anything else. Almost every morning he would wake me up and ask, "Papa, are I four?" When I said, "not yet, darling, but you will be pretty soon," he would say, with his long peculiar drawl, "o-o-oh." His ideas of a suitable birthday celebration were very modest; all he wanted was a cake and a house. Vina made the cake and I made the house out of a box, fitting it with doors, real glass windows, etc. It did not take him long to discover them when the momentous morning came, and he called to every one that he was four, and had a cake and a ditta (little) house. He had meant a real house, big enough to live in, but the "ditta" one pleased him so well that he was quite satisfied.

One morning, when he was about two years old, he crawled out of bed very quietly, took my big silver watch from my vest picket, and began pounding it against the foot of the bed, swinging it by the chain. I rescued it before it had sustained any greater damage than a smashed crystal. Another morning he fished my revolver from under my pillow and I awoke to find him busily trying to find out how it worked. I was so frightened that I did not sleep with the weapon again until long after he was old enough to sleep by himself. Soon after I got to keeping it under my pillow again I had another scare. I awoke from a dream with the pistol in my hand, ready to shoot. That settled the revolver business for me. I locked it up in a desk and have never seen it since, I believe.

Vina used to color a lot of eggs at Easter time, and place them in nests about the yard, for the children to find. The

first year she did that Frank was not with us. Naomi found all of the eggs in a jiffy, and poor Harry was disconsolate until Vina ostentatiously hid some of them again and he found them. He was always glad of any good thing that came to Naomi and tried to bear his own disappointments with good grace. Before your mamma died Maggie Myers made a pretty May basket and hung it on the door for Naomi. Both children were much delighted but after a while Harry said, with just a shade of longing, "I didn't get just one flower." That night your mamma and I contrived a May basket and hung it for him, which pleased him greatly. Frankie was too young at that time to appreciate May baskets.

Harry had a funny way of seeming to swell when he was grieved, evidently in an effort to keep from crying. Vina used to tell him he would swell up and bust. One day, while your mamma was still with us, our young calf was taken with something wrong with its "tummy" and bloated to an enormous degree. While we were working with it, Harry, who had been watching the proceedings with a good deal of sympathy, suddenly exhibited his usual swelling symptoms and said, between efforts to choke back the sobs, "lit' baby calfie—too big." Another time he discovered that the calf had escaped from its pen and robbed the cow of all available sustenance. Swellingly he reported the disaster—"lit' baby calfie got all my goo' warm muh."(Good warm milk).

One day I spent an hour or so cutting out little paper dolls for Naomi and Harry, and fitting them with paper dresses to match. Naomi was much pleased with her's and played with them a good while. Harry took his without a word, carried them to the back porch, which had a crack in the floor, and, one by one, silently beheaded the dolls and dropped them through, dresses and all. Whether he was insulted at the girlish gift or not he never said. Neither did he ever mention the matter afterward. He was about two and a half years old.

Once I brought home a pound of small nails and two little hammers, thinking they would furnish amusement for Harry and Naomi for a good while. That was at noon. When I

came to supper the last nail, and the first nail, and all intervening nails, had disappeared, barring the heads, into the seats of some old wooden chairs—the same ones your mamma and I had begun housekeeping with. Another time I brought them each a pair of small blunt scissors to cut out pictures with. In less time than it takes to write it Harry had clipped the pleats on the front of his dress, about an inch apart, from top to bottom.

You will see that I am recalling these incidents just as they occur to my mind, making no attempt at chronological sequence, and you are at liberty to sort and arrange them to suit yourselves.

When Harry was a few months old we bought a second-hand crib for Naomi, which was placed within arm's reach of our bed. She was very good to acquiesce in the new arrangement, but one night was nervous and begged to sleep with me. We tried to talk her out of it, but she could not go to sleep, and kept begging and saying, "I would be nice lady". Finally I scolded her and she cried so pitifully, repeating over and over, "I would be nice lady". I repented of my harshness and took the little sobbing girl in with me, with the result that she went gratefully to sleep within a few minutes. I have always grieved at having spoken harshly to her at that time and do not like to think of it to this day. When I do think of it, I want to ask her pardon. It was the only time, but one, that I ever did speak to her in a harsh tone. The other occasion was when she was about six years old. For some unaccountable reason she had refused to reply to a question I had asked—an unheard of thing for her. Instead of passing it by for the moment, as I should now, I had the mistaken notion that to overlook so flagrant a breach of filial obedience would be to open the door for more serious offenses, and that justice to the child required me, against my better feeling, to punish her. I told her to go into the other room and close the door. Such a command was so astounding to my darling little girl, who had always been my close companion, that she could not believe I meant it, and did not stir. I repeated the command in a harsh tone. When she finally realized the awful fact that I had actually banished her from my presence she looked as if I had struck her in

the face, and with heartrending sobs obeyed the dreadful edict. I hope she got over the pain of it sooner than I did. I have not yet reached the point where the recollection of it does not hurt, and hurt way down deep. I repaired the error as well and as soon as I could by almost immediately calling her out and soothing the little frightened and grieved heart, but I would give a good deal to be able to erase it from my record.

Naomi, when quite small, called every kind of hurt bump". When chiggers bit her she said it was bump, and when she had a headache or stomachache, it was bump. One day she took a notion to run off up town to papa. Her mamma caught her before she had gone far but she flatly refused to go back. "No, go see papa". After vain efforts to talk her out of the notion her mamma picked up a tiny switch and tapped her dress with it. Naomi brushed the place where the switch had touched and said, "No bump daste". (No hurt dress).

While Frankie was in Ohio I read a letter from your grandma at the table. Among other things she told of Frankie's having played himself into a sweat and then come into the house with the avowed object of "warming off". We all had a good laugh at the expression and pretty soon Harry said, with a wistful look, "I wish I had said that".

Harry was rather of an argumentative disposition—is yet, for that matter. An example, when he was about six: He had handled a dish carelessly and dropped it, though, fortunately, without disaster. I said, "Now, Harry, you see papa was right in wanting you to take hold the other way; suppose you had broken the dish?" "Why, go and get another one out of the cupboard". "Then what if you broke that one, too?" "Why, get another one out of the cupboard." "Suppose you broke all of them, what then?" "Why, go and get some more." "But suppose there were no more?" Nothing daunted, he replied, "Why, tell the man to make some more." "What if the man was dead?" "Why, go to the other man." "But what if everybody who knew how to make them were dead, and all the stuff they are made from had been used up?" For a moment he was stumped and he thought in silence a little while. Then his face brightened and he said,

still in the tone and with the expression of one who imparts useful information, "Why, I don't know."

When Naomi and Harry began school they had had little experience in mingling with other children, or in finding their way about town. They went hand in hand, and on the first or second day took the wrong direction on being dismissed. They had gone almost to the river, vainly looking for a familiar house or face, and had begun to cry when a kind passerby found them and took them home.

Another day, soon afterward, they found a cow on the sidewalk on their way home, and again resorted to the only remedy they could think of—stopping and crying. Mr. Griffy, the city marshal, discovered their predicament and without a tremor, piloted them around the enemy. Both children thought him the most wonderfully intrepid man, aside from their father, that trod the earth.

Frank had no such troubles, for by the time he was ready for school the other children were used to the ways of the world, so far as the trip to school and back was concerned. He did meet with a distressing Waterloo, however, before he had been long in school. He had a way of pretending to be very badly hurt whenever he got an accidental bump in playing with the other children, and would sometimes hop about on one foot for ten minutes at a time, as though he could not put the other to the ground. I had tried to talk and laugh him out of the habit, but without much success. One day he came home from school, much distressed. He said, "Papa, the boys call me Crip." I found that he had tried his usual tactics, with no better result than to be laughed at and given the nickname. I showed him that the only way to get along with the other boys was to play as they did and take his bumps with the rest of them; and that the only way to get rid of the name was not to be a "crip" any more. It was a hard lesson, for the appellation stuck to him a while, but was finally dropped when they found that he was really a good fellow and playmate. One day, in Miss Londry's room, he surreptitiously packed snow around the bulb of the thermometer. The teacher looked at the lowered column of mercury and at once turned on more gas in the stove. In a

few moments she looked again, found the temperature still apparently much below the regulation, and turned on more gas, the sweltering children wondering why she did it. Finally she called in the superintendent, who turned on all the gas possible. By that time the room was smothering with heat. He said, "It does not seem very cold in here", and examined the thermometer which, by that time was leaking. "Who put this snow in here?" he thundered. And Frankie gleefully called out, "I did." The whole school burst into a hearty, if frightened, laugh. The superintendent and teacher looked at each other and laughed, too, and no further notice was taken of the misdemeanor. You children, as, of course, you know, kept one grade apart and graduated from the city schools in that order.

Before your grandmother and Frankie had gone to Ohio after your mamma died, she was trying one day to get him to sleep in the front room by wheeling him back and forth in his buggy. Suddenly he sat up, and in a moment made his way over the side of the buggy and trotted out to the kitchen to inspect the preparations for dinner. Finding everything satisfactory he slipped back into the room where his grandma was still slowly wheeling the buggy back and forth, pretending entire ignorance of his absence, climbed back in and went to sleep in the full belief that he had gloriously fooled his grandma.

Father's Happy Recollections.

I believe that few fathers were ever more intimately acquainted with their children than I. I have no happier recollections than of the Sunday afternoons when, with one of you on each arm of my big chair and one in my lap, we read stories, made and guessed puzzles in turn, and had a good time in general. Or we played checkers, all four on one board in a specially invented game which insured the winning of the game by each in turn; or we spun tops of our own manufacture, and in many other ways played together like the four children that we were. Or, in fine weather, we rented a boat for a quarter, and made interest-

ing, if imaginary, visits to Grandma and Grandpa, and Aunt Mary, and Aunt Ida, and Uncle Harry, at various points along the banks of the river. None of you ever showed the slightest fear of the water, or of anything else when I was along.

One afternoon we were waiting on the street for a bus to take us to the county fair. An old colored woman, a frightful looking old creature with a death's head and long bony fingers, came up and stuck her skeleton forefinger almost into the faces of Harry and Naomi, Frankie being still in Ohio, and said in a fierce tone, "Is them good chilluns?" evidently with the intention of enjoying their terror. Naomi calmly surveyed the hideous features, as though interested in a new type of humanity, but said nothing. Harry gave her one of his friendly smiles and said, "I don't know, ask Papa." A little disconcerted, the old creature repeated the question to me and I smilingly assured her that they were very good, upon which she said, "Well, all right, then, I haint after no chilluns only them what haint good chilluns," and passed on.

One morning a one-legged man appeared at the back door and asked for something to eat. While your mamma was getting it for him Harry went to scrape the man's acquaintance, but seeing his unfortunate condition, drew back amazed and exclaimed, "Oh, you ain't got but one feets!"

The April before your mamma died, your Uncle Harry came to see us. It was the first time we had seen each other since my marriage and, of course, he had never seen either your mamma or you. We were wonderfully glad to have him and he thought your mamma was the one woman in a thousand. She and he were great friends at once. She asked him to paint a picture on her old school slate, which she had kept in perfect condition, and the pictured slate is still hanging on our wall, as you know. He could hardly bring himself to realize that I actually had a family. He said, "Isie, it seems just like you had found a family. Of course I knew you were married and had three children, but I never realized it until now," He was much surprised, as well as amused, at hearing Naomi using such correct Eng-

lish. He had always talked baby talk to his own children and began it with you. It was a new language to you children and you were as much surprised at it as he was at your talk. Every little while Naomi would look at him in wonder a moment, that he should be so ill-informed in pronunciation, and then repeat what he had said, but correctly. He fully intended sending Aunt Sadie to visit us in the fall, soon after their new baby should come. He did, indeed, send her and the new baby at that time, but your mamma had gone from us. Dear Aunt Sadie and that new baby have both been called to Heaven within the present year. It may be that they know your mamma and she them—a privilege that was denied them here.

I had thought that I would write some account of your mother's last sickness, and her taking away, but find that I am not equal to the task. She was sick but sixteen days, with what the doctor pronounced typhoid fever. She never for a moment, after she was stricken, became better, but on the contrary grew rapidly and constantly worse in spite of the doctor's best efforts. I wrote to your grandmother, urging her to come without delay. Two days later I telegraphed for her to come at once, which she did. She arrived on Thursday evening, and it was well that she did, for had she been delayed a day longer your mother would not have known she had come. As it was, she knew her voice, and said, "Mother, I know it is you though I can't see you." She had been entirely blind almost from the first. The next morning she was delirious, and so remained until the end. Throughout her delirium she recognized that her mother was with her, and that knowledge has been a great source of comfort to us.

Your grandma and Uncle Harry stayed with us a while after the funeral—Grandma, indeed, staying several weeks. It was a hard problem I had to face, and for a time I could not see any possible solution. The future seemed a very large and barren blank. In my own mind, looking back to that time, it seems to me that I was like a lone survivor of a shipwreck, far from the sight of land and without the least idea of direction. Every way I turned, and every plan that presented itself, seemed alike to lead nowhere. Only one

thing was firmly settled; that I would by some means keep my children together with me. This was possible only to an extent. Frankie was too little and too puny to risk trying to keep him at that time, as I have shown heretofore, so he went with his good grandparents to remain three years; coming home for a few weeks, however, each year. After talking and thinking over the matter some days it was decided to ask Miss Vina Compton to come and stay a while, and she was kind enough to come. The children already knew her, since she had lived with us when Harry was born and for some time afterward. To relieve any embarrassment she might feel Mrs. St. John let one of the girls stay with her at night. That was twenty-four years ago and Vina is still one of us. She has been a wise and good mother to all of you and there are few mothers who would do more for their own children than she has done for you, as you well know. And there are few who bear for their own children a more sincere affection than she has always borne, and still bears for you. On the other hand, there are few children who have a greater respect and affection for their own mother than you have always felt for her. Her success in the hard undertaking is all the more to be wondered at when it is remembered that she was hardly twenty years old when your mamma died. It is beyond question owing to her kind heart and genuine Christian character that I was able to keep you together and to maintain a home for us all. All of us, and especially I, am under the deepest obligation to her for her patient and cheerful efforts all those trying years when a woman of lighter character would have given up the task almost at once. At your ages now, you can see and appreciate her unselfishness, and I believe you do.

Speaking of her being with us when Harry was born reminds me that he was a very bow-legged baby and had a most inconvenient way of tightly folding his little fat legs whenever Vina had to change his apparel She used to tell him, "Lie down here and untie your legs." At that time she was only seventeen years old, but was remarkably patient and efficient in caring for the new baby.

I have already stretched my book much beyond my

original intention and, perhaps, to an unwarranted length. But I give it to you as it is, trusting and hoping that it may afford you some degree of pleasure. With it goes my dearest love and my earnest prayer for your happiness. In your choice of life companions you have given me a son and two daughters of whom I am proud and whom I love with my whole heart. No father was ever blessed with truer or better children than I with my six, nor was ever a dearer and lovelier grandchild than our darling Nettie Jane.

In the full belief that you will meet the problems of life that come to you, bravely, wisely and honorably, I look forward with peace and contentment to such years as may still be allotted to me.

Upon completing the foregoing I had regarded my work in connection with the book as finished and turned the manuscript over to the publisher, Mr. C. A. Connelly, for beating into shape. After a careful examination he has returned it with the criticism that it should include some reference to my very modest efforts in the literary field and to the public offices with which I have been honored. While these things had no place in the original design of the book, and while I still am unable to see very clearly how they can add any particular value to a work addressed to my own children, yet my confidence in Mr. Connelly's judgment regarding all matters connected with publishing is so complete that I append the following:

I have cherished from early childhood an ambition to write something that would be of interest to others. My brother sometimes refers laughingly to a wonderful piece of doggerel I composed when I was ten years old under the happy hallucination that it was a poem. When I lived at Billy Murphy's I wrote an ambitious love story which both Billy and Ellen considered good and which they frequently re-read. Of course I know now that it was of no literary value whatever and I mention it only to show that I had the aspiration to write at that age.

I have written only a few stories that have found publication, all of them appearing in the "Youth's Companion." About 1889 that paper solicited stories in competition for certain cash prizes ranging from $100 to $1,500. With no

more than the faintest kind of hope I submitted three short stories. I did not, of course, win a prize, but the editor was kind enough to accept one of the three and sent me a check for twenty-five dollars in payment. The other two were returned with some very kind and evidently sincere criticisms and I was invited to submit other stories for consideration. I did so and some of them—about half—were accepted and paid for at the same rate as the first—twenty-five dollars each. Then I sent a few others as I could find time to write them during the next several years with about the same success. The price was always the same until I submitted "Coonie," a story which seemed to attract the attention of the editor-in-chief. He wrote me a personal letter thanking me for the story and enclosing check for thirty-five dollars. This story was one of the few included in their annual prospectus for the succeeding year. He again wrote me, asking for a sketch of my life, my ancestry, etc. At the same time he asked me to write a series of "Stories of a Lawyer," to be published under that heading, he having in some way conceived the impression that I was a member of that profession. After reading the short account of myself that I submitted at his request, he asked me to write a series of "Teacher's Stories," based on my mother's experience and of my own. Later he asked me to write a number of "Stories of a Druggist." About that time I engaged in business on my account, and being deeply in debt I felt obliged to devote all my time to making a success of the undertaking. So, to my deep regret, I was unable to accept the enticing offers made by the editor. He afterwards wrote me from time to time, always expressing the hope that I might soon find time to write the stories he had suggested, but he finally gave me up as a bad job. I have saved his very kind letters and once in a great while I allow myself the recreation of looking through them and dreaming, like Maud Muller and the Judge, of "what might have been." I admit, however, that it is an unprofitable recreation and that there is a strong probability that in any circumstances it could not "have been." For some years I was interested in the puzzle departments of the Inter-Ocean and the National Tribune and became pretty well known to the students of

those columns under the assumed name of "Fireglow", a transposal of "I. G. Fowler." Several hundreds of my puzzles were published in these papers and I was awarded a number of prizes in the semi-annual contest for the best puzzles submitted. Notably I received a set of the "Century Dictionary", then a new publication. At that time I felt that I could not afford to keep so valuable a work, so I sold the set to Messrs McClurg & Co. of Chicago for $45.00, the retail price being $60.00. I wrote only "flats"; that is, charades, enigmas, anagrams, riddles, etc., always in verse. I never attempted "forms," which include diamonde, squares, etc., though I always enjoyed the work of solving them. Both the writing and the solving of the puzzles, while not very remunerative in a financial sense, were of great value to me in acquisition of words and their usage, as well as in composition. I can hardly think of an occupation that compels a more thorough study of the dictionary, the gazeteer and the books of biography, than does the composing and solving of high-class puzzles.

There must have been about forty regular contributors to the Inter-Ocean's "Complications" at that time and I believe that I was generally regarded as third in rank; Miss Mary C. Snyder of Springfield, Ill., being first and Charles H. Coons of Washington, D. C., second. They wrote with the signatures of "M. C. S." and "R. O. Chester". Studying each other's work every week, we became acquainted with the style of each writer. Once the editor of "Complications" published all the puzzles for a month without signatures and offered prizes for the reader who correctly guessed the authors of the largest number. I received first prize, having named, as I remember, forty-seven out of a possible fifty-one.

Regarding the official positions I have held, there is little to tell. I was elected many years ago to the City Council of Independence and was made president of the Council the last year of my term. A year or two later I was elected without opposition to a membership on the board of education and was re-elected to the same position several times. When the members of the board were elected by partisan ballot both parties were friendly enough to give me the nomination until a state law was enacted prohibiting the appearance of

the same name on both tickets. Even then for a few times the Democratic party did me the honor to refrain from making a nomination in opposition to me and left the space blank. I believe I served altogether fourteen years on the board—eight years as its president. The work was most congenial and brought me into close relations with a number of men whose friendships I shall always be happy to have attained. While I had as associates on the board some who were undoubtedly of far greater ability than I, yet I believe I may say without undue egotism that none were better fitted to judge with comprehensive sympathy in such cases as involved the relations of children, teachers, principals, superintendent and parents. I can not but feel that my experience as the son of an able teacher, as a child of bitter poverty, and, later, as the father of children in all grades of the public schools, enabled me to take a broader view and to exercise a sounder judgment in such matters than would have been possible otherwise. During my term of service on the board all of the present city school buildings were erected and equipped at a cost of more than $150,000, and the number of teachers increased from seventeen to more than fifty, the city having rapidly gained in population. When I resigned my membership on the board to take the office of City Commissioner of finance and revenue, it was with a good deal of reluctance, and my brother members were partial enough to express deep regret in a most friendly letter which I shall always treasure. The teachers, too, were most kind and gave me a valuable chain with Knight Templar charm. I was elected to my present office as you know by a very gratifying majority, my vote being about fifty per cent more than that of my competitor. The campaign was probably one of the cleanest that has ever been waged, all of the candidates being good friends and each of us enjoying the respect and confidence of all the others. I had three competitors for the nomination by primary and, of course, one for the election. Not a word was said nor an act committed to disturb in the slightest degree the mutual good will and friendship; and after the election we were, and still are, as good friends as ever. This fact is a source of much gratification to me. Had

the election cost me the loss of any man's friendship or respect I should have regarded the price as much too high.

One of my duties, as you know, is that of rendering assistance to the city's needy, the office of Overseer of the Poor being attached to that of Commissioner of Finance. I think this is, perhaps, the most congenial part of my work, as nothing interests me more than the trials and struggles of the poor—especially poor children. In the Great Judgment, when I am called to account for my many errors and shortcomings, I hope to have some of these, His best loved children, to plead for me, and to testify that I have given them a cup of cold water, in His name.

Now, with my richest love, and my earnest prayer to the Giver of all good for your welfare and happiness, I close my book of memories.

Independence, Kansas,
Christmas, 1914.