A Buckeye Boyhood

by

William Henry Venable

Originally published by

The Robert Clarke Company
Cincinnati
1911

by the same author

A History on the United States
Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley.
Let Him First be a Man (essays)
A Dream of Empire, or The House of Blennerhassett (a novel.)
Tom Tad. a Novel of Boy-Life. illustrated
Footprints of the Pioneers. illustrated
Tales from Ohio History. illustrated
June on the Miami, and Other Poems
The Teacher's Dream, and Other Poems. illustrated
Saga of The Oak, and Other Poems. with portrait
Cincinnati: a civic ode
Floridian Sonnets. with portrait

William Henry Venable was born near Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio, on April 29, 1836.

Following the events of this book, at seventeen, he was granted a teaching certificate. When the Southwestern State Normal School was opened in Lebanon in 1855, he was among the first to enroll. He attended three years, teaching part-time at Liberty school east of Lebanon, and also at Carlisle, Ohio. He then served as a teacher in the Normal School through 1860. There he acquired academic knowledge and began the historical investigations which later established his reputation as a foremost authority on the literary annals of the Ohio Valley. At the Normal School he met the girl who was to become his wife in 1861, Mary Ann Palmer Vater.

In the winter and spring of 1857-1858, accompanied by a friend and fellow student, he took a rambling trip through Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana by stagecoach, river steamer, horseback, train, and on foot. A record of this trip called "Down South Before the War" was later written for the Ohio Archaeological Quarterly, Vol. 11, No. 4.

He volunteered for the Union Army at the beginning of the Civil War, but was rejected as undersized and because of poor health.

He and his bride moved to Cincinnati in the fall of 1862, where he became a teacher at the Chickering Institute, a private academy for boys established in 1855, becoming proprietor and Principal in 1881. The institute closed in 1886 for financial reasons.

He devoted the next three years to the completion of long delayed literary undertakings and to lecturing in Ohio, Indiana. Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and West Virginia. The most popular of his lectures during this period were "Down South Before the War" and "The Coming Man," and the dramatic impersonation, "Tom Tad, or the Humor and Pathos of Boy Life."

From 1889 to 1900 he was engaged in public education in Cincinnati, serving as head of the department of English, first in Hughes High School and later in Walnut Hills High School. He exercised a far-reaching influence on educational ideals and methods through the publication of a volume of pedagogical essays entitled Let Him First Be a Man, and of a series of text books on English poetry which for more than twenty years were used in thousands of American schools.
In 1900, at the age of sixty-four, W. H. Venable retired from teaching to devote his energies to literature. He did a great deal of editorial work with which his name was but little, if at all, associated, and a number of literary commissions on specific subjects.

Among his friends and correspondents he numbered Alexander McGuffey, compiler of the famous Readers; James Whitcomb Riley, Longfellow, Holmes, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), and Presidents Garfield, Hayes, Harrison, and McKinley.

Though never a graduate of a college, William Henry Venable received honorary degrees from three institutions: from DePauw in 1864 an honorary Master of Arts Degree; from Ohio University in 1886 a Doctor of Laws; and from the University of Cincinnati in 1917 its highest award, the Doctor of Letters.

Contents

A Buckeye Boyhood

Chapter I - Seventy Years Ago

These reminiscences of the observation and experience of a country boy in one of the southern counties of Ohio, relate mainly to the period of the eighteen-forties, a decade during which. vast areas of land in the Middle West were as yet unreclaimed from the wilderness. In many sections the primeval forest maintained stubborn supremacy upon a thousand half-cleared farms, standing with mute and frowning defiance, against the encroachment of agriculture. Though an incessant

> "clamor of the axes ran
> Along the great woods,"

the ruthless lumberman had but fairly begun his devastating warfare. Nature, jealous of her ancient savage reign, spurned conquest, abhorred "improvement," and did all she could to obstruct and frustrate the puny efforts of human hands to subdue her proud estate to the uses of civilization.

The advent of agricultural machinery, the age of man's mastery over, or servitude to, steam and electricity, had not arrived. The brawn of the "labor-lords," and the harnessed muscle of horse and ox, directly applied, were almost the only physical forces by which the work of clearing the fields and tilling the soil was accomplished. The process of taming the reluctant wild, of fencing arable acres, and of making thoroughfares, demanded unremitting energy and vigilance from whoever would hope to secure a maintenance and establish tolerable relations of comfort and convenience with the surroundings of his independent little world, a raw farm shadowed by forest trees, invaded by rank native weeds, undermined by the grubworm and the mole, and pillaged by squirrels, crows, and marauding hordes of pigeons and blackbirds.

Many pages of this true story of country life in southern Ohio deal with those vaunted Old Times, traditionally known as "*good*," over which still lingered the parting twilight of the colonial, or, at least, the revolutionary day of unremitting toil; that severe day of apprenticeship to trades; day of "bound boys" and of overtaxed housewives; day when honest and frugal poverty was liable to be sold out of its wagon and plow, its kitchen utensils, table and bed, by the sheriff, for the sin of unavoidable debt; day of rising with the far-away English lark; day when the strenuous and inexorable mandates of "Poor Richard's Almanac" were virtuously and rigorously enforced and obeyed as if they were holy Scripture, and when even young children learned by heart, with the

purpose of making them rules of conduct, such prudential maxims as: “God helps them who help themselves”; “The sleeping fox catches no poultry”; “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise”; “He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive”; and “Rather go to bed supperless, than to rise in debt.”

Boys and girls who were thus brought up, under a régime entailed by customs surviving from pioneer days, did not regard their lot as a hard one, or the new Western country in which they dwelt as being a wild region of comparatively recent settlement, nor did they at all realize that the rigorous life they were living bordered closely on the simplest and most primitive. They were not aware that they were daily

> “Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content
> The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,
> And drinking from the well of homely life.”

Contented they were, and self-reliant; they felt no sense of disadvantage; they were proud and glad of their heritage of liberty and opportunity. Among them was no repining, no flinching from each one's fair share of exposure and task, deprivation and sacrifice. Luxury was not coveted, but the essentials to a comfortable, independent subsistence gained by labor and frugality were secured, and the sheer joy of exertion and delight in the untrammeled freedom of periods of productive toil, chiefly spent out of doors, rendered their condition happy.

As for the particular Buckeye Boy whose experiences are here interwoven with memories and observations of a more general character, he was native to the wildwoods and a foster-child of the unfenced valleys and hills. Though his infancy was not rocked in the proverbial, idyllic sugar-trough, “Tip” - for so the boy was familiarly called, being a namesake of the hero of Tippecanoe - was born within the walls of a veritable log-house, the timbers of which his father, assisted by accommodating neighbors, had hewn from straight trees felled in the near forest, and had raised to their place in the rude structure with hand-spike and studying shoulder.

Dimly pictured in the light of fading recollection is that rustic dwelling, a structure so simple, so sylvan, and so directly appropriated from nature, that it might well have been described in the phrase of Emerson as “a quotation from the forest.” Through its narrow windows could be seen on every side the surrounding woods mysteriously beautiful and solemn. A mile or two eastward of the cleared and cultivated acres near the dwelling, the prolific land, thickly overgrown with towering trees and luxuriant undershrubs, sloped steeply down to a pleasant river, the Little Miami, murmuring sleepily along its flat shore whereon mud-turtles sunned themselves in hot weather, and where the patient sandhill crane used to stand motionless on his long

stilt-legs, watching for unwary minnows swimming in the pebbly shallows.

Within a few pares of the dooryard there lay an open field of grass billowing to the summer breeze like a miniature green sea. To wade out into this fragrant deep of verdure far enough to reach a tempting shoal where grew on slender stalks a prize of pendulous meadow lilies of deep orange color with dark purple spots inside, was an adventure no less daring than delightful to the five-year-old lad who received his first impression of life and nature in and near the sequestered cottage which was the home of his early childhood.

Chapter II - The Moving

Before Tip was old enough to take particular notice of his environment, the family removed to another residence situated on a newly-purchased tract lying a few miles farther west.

On a chill and gusty November day, in which brief spells of sunshine alternated with cloudy hours spitting moist snow, the moving took place. Two or three heavy wagons were sufficient to convey the farm implements and household goods to the new premises. One of these vehicles afforded cramped space on top of its other lading for Tip's mother, his two sisters, and himself, to snuggle between a rolled-up feather-bed and a bundle of blankets and pillows. Room was made, also, for the shivering small body of a pet dog named Coley, a pampered aristocrat who wore an elegant morocco collar fastened by means of a tiny brass padlock. The inconvenient passenger coach was provided with a canvas cover drawn over a set of hickory wagon-bows. Notwithstanding the disagreeable weather and the discomfort attendant upon crowding five persons within the narrow confines afforded them in the front end of a jolting vehicle already overloaded, the children were delighted with the novel excursion, though Tip secretly suspected that his mother, for some cause unimaginable to him, was not in high. spirits. Could it be possible that he saw a tear trickle down her cheek, as she sat beside his father, wrapped in a warm shawl and holding her little daughter Cynthia closely to her breast?

The small boy, voyaging he knew not whither or why, looked out through the arch formed by the white canopy which shut from his view all the landscape except that lying directly in front, and he could see, over the heads of the horses, a level stretch of unfenced, narrow road, bare trees on either side, and ragged clouds scudding across the distant sky. When tired of thus gazing forward, he would lean over and peep down between the edge of the wagon-bed and the flapping cover, and watch the crisp brown leaves as they danced and rustled over the slightly frozen ground, along the roadside, or would listen to the thud of the horses' hoofs, the dull jingling of the trace-chains, and the sound of the wheels that, crunching along in deeply-worn ruts, through thin ice under which no water remained, made a pleasant kind of wintry music. The antics of the dry leaves and the shrilly tune of the tires shivering the ice-glaze impressed his memory more lastingly than did anything else observed by him during that slow but not very long journey.

According to a prearranged plan, the movers did not drive directly to the empty domicile which was to be their future home, but the wagons were halted near the house of Tip's grandmother, where the party was to stop over night. The grandmother was a widow who, with three grown-up sons and two daughters, dwelt in a spacious, typical log-mansion of the early period when Ohio was not yet quite out of the backwoods.

The old homestead was a commodious and comfortable structure of hewn logs, consisting of two main sections each, a story and a half high, separated and also united by a paved area or open rectangle sheltered from sun and rain by a clapboard roof. At either end of the "double cabin" rose a huge stone chimney which projected on the outside of the house. Dwelling places of a similar character are yet to be seen in some of the Southern States. The ground floor of the eastern wing of the house was put to many uses, serving as kitchen, dining-room, general workshop, and dormitory, while the western lower room was reserved for less promiscuous purposes, being a kind of parlor and a sanctuary for Sunday retirement, and for the reception of company dressed in Sunday "go-to-meeting" clothes, though occasionally one might venture into this ever neat and tidy room even on a week-day, to read a proper book or to write an important letter.

The sleeping quarters on the second floor were close and dusky, and the guest who sought a couch in one of these had to be careful, for he ran the risk of knocking his crown against the low rafters. The soft rain on the near roof overhead pattered gently as he settled himself to slumber, and if the shower was violent, he might expect that some insinuating drops would slip between the clapboards and fall upon his pillow or his face.

The room into which Tip was ushered, in company with his father, mother, brother, sisters, and the snappish but consequential pet, Coley, was a cheerful and attractive apartment when seen in the warm welcoming light which radiated from the inner hearth. The great fireplace made brave display of its iron crane, its brass andirons under the blazing forestick, and its smoldering backlog, a foot or more in thickness and big enough to last all night and half the next day. Above the chimney-piece, resting upon wooden brackets, lay a long rifle, and on the opposite wall, suspended by wooden pegs, were hung shot-pouches and powder-horns in ornamental array.

In one corner of the room stood a hand-loom, with a roll of linsey-woolsey wound upon its clothbeam. This weaving machine was something new to the boy, and he was curious to find out how it worked, and what was the purpose of the heddles, the reed, the batten, and the shuttle. In the due course of time, but not on that busy evening, his grandmother, who was very amiable, notwithstanding the ominous frown with which she sometimes regarded him through her spectacles, explained and illustrated not only the mysteries of the loom, but also the mechanism and operation of spinning-wheels, great and small, for wool and for flax, and how to handle the scutching-machine and the hetchel, and the teasing-cards, and the distaff; and sometimes she allowed him to turn the yarn-reel, an ingenious contrivance which, as often as it measured off enough yards to make a skein, announced the fact by the sharp click of a spring hidden amidst its inner works.

It was in this same pioneer log-house that Tip first saw and investigated that

interesting combination of utilities, a cobbler's bench, with its easy leathern seat, its outfit of hammer and last, shoe-knife and sewing-awl, lap-stone, shoe-pegs, shoe-thread and shoemaker's wax.

On the south side of the house there was a porch, upon which were along bench and several stools for the accommodation of those who in rainy weather or at the "nooning" hour chose to sit there, to rest, chat, or smoke a pipe; or to seek the toilet accommodations afforded by the tin washbasin, the towels, and the hair-dressing articles of bone or of wood, deposited in the pasteboard comb-case. Under the sheltering roof, on hooks and nails driven into the wall, were to be seen scythe and sickle, hoe and rake, quail-nets and fishing-poles, handspikes, axes, and husking-pegs. The veranda and the gable end of the house were overgrown thickly with clinging vines of the trumpet-creeper.

A few steps from the porch brought one to the well-curb, near which slanted the uncouth sweep with its dangling rope of grape-vine, to the lower end of which was suspended the "iron-bound bucket," celebrated in song.

Not far from the well stood the milk-house, always cool within, and always attractive on account of numerous pans of milk, pots of cream, and crocks of golden butter, ranged carefully upon the smooth and level earthen floor. In another outhouse a cheese-press was kept ready for service in proper season, for every accomplished housewife had to establish and sustain a proud reputation for skill in the manipulation of curds and rennet.

No attempt shall here be made to describe all the appurtenances of the old house, or to enumerate the processes of domestic manufacture in vogue in country places at the period when Tip explored the premises of the log-mansion where he slept on that memorable night in November, 1842. Later he had ample opportunity to become familiar with every nook and cranny of the old house and with all its interior and exterior belongings.

One of the domestic objects to attract his childish attention was an ancient Dutch clock, an undoubted Hollander, which field a dignified station in the parlor, ticking most soberly and with a moral precision which made no allowance for human shortcomings, and only needed to be wound up once in eight days. It displayed no fewer than four index hands, pointing out the days, the hours, the minutes, and the seconds. On its broad dial-plate were shown, besides the twelve numerals usually seen on the face of a clock, various astronomical signs, and a device representing the moon in different phases. This impressive timepiece, owing to the extraordinary length of the cords to which its ponderous weights were attached, was called, somewhat disrespectfully, as Tip thought, Old Long-String. For all that, Old Long-String regulated the Habits of the household, and when he struck the hour, you could hear his clear bell ringing from one end of the log-mansion to the other, "upstairs, and downstairs,

and in my lady's chamber."

Other articles in the parlor, that especially took Tip's eye, were of a decorative character. On the wall hung a couple of wood-cuts or engravings of some kind, printed in color. These garish works of art held his gaze by the hour, and haunted his imagination in after years. The pictures were about eight by ten inches in size and had frames with protecting glass. One represented Daniel O'Connell, the Irish patriot, robed in a long cloak and looking very heroic. The other, purporting to be the portrait of "Isabel," revealed the charms of a very red-lipped young lady wearing a spangled bodice and a jaunty hat over which flaunted a profusion of ostrich feathers and under which clustered a redundance of golden curls.

Chapter III - Taking A Fresh Start

After sleeping soundly all night upon a pallet improvised for him on the floor, Tip was aroused bright and early, by his brother, and soon thereafter, together with other household belongings, he was on the last stage of the journey to the newly-acquired house and home. The distance was short, the blouse being situated on a farm adjoining his grandmother's estate.

Now that the moving of their goods and chattels from one locality to another was practically accomplished, the unsettled and already homesick folks constituting the family began to realize that it was no easy and simple achievement to transfer themselves, body and soul, out of one abode and habitat into another. Even the "Chambered Nautilus" carries with it through life all the rooms in which it has ever dwelt. Young and old were to learn that it took a good while for the hearts prone to stay behind in the abandoned cottage near the Miami, to make themselves at ease in the second house which, like a stepmother, was at first regarded with some mistrust.

The new house - they called it new, though it was in fact older than the one they had moved out of - consisted of two main compartments on the ground-floor, one serving as a general sitting-room for the family, and as a sleeping-room for the parents and their daughters, Newell and little Cynthia; the other being devoted to kitchen purposes; while upstairs was the third chamber, a spacious garret where the boys, John and Tip, had their quarters. A narrow porch projected in front of the principal room. Two doors, one at the front and one at the rear, gave entrance and egress to and from the house, and a few small windows let in the sunlight, and admitted quiet and peaceful views either of green fields in summer or of dazzling plains of snow in winter. Such scanty and rude accommodations as were afforded by so cramped a tenement sufficed the simple needs of the family for a term of two or three years, and then an "addition" was built, more than doubling the original size of the structure.

No great length of time was required to transfer from the wagons to the new house its indispensable furnishings: chairs, table, bureau, beds and bedding, dishes and crockery, cooking utensils, spinning-wheels and reel, the mantel clock, the cedar-wood chest, and the beautifully fashioned cradle of polished black walnut, in which all the children had been rocked.

Whilst the unloading and proper adjusting of the household effects to their new places went on, Tip, with healthy curiosity, and accompanied by Coley, took occasion to make a timid exploration of the near premises of the strange habitation in which he was to dwell. Not far from the back door he discovered, under a low shed, a furnace-like form of brick, which, from its peculiar masonry, he recognized as the bake-oven, for heating the arched hollow of which he foresaw he was destined to gather and split fuel many and many a time thereafter. Another structure of domestic importance,

because it supplied a crude element for soap-making, also claimed the boy's attention. This was the ash-hopper, from which the straw and leached ashes of last year had not yet been emptied, and under the drain-trough of which stood a large, round-bottomed iron kettle half full of dark brown lye. More provocative of curiosity than the bake-oven or the ash-hopper; was a snug, miniature brick building which bad a tight-fitting oaken door, but no window or other opening save a small aperture near the top of its rear wall. This dwarf castle, which looked like a big toy and displayed on one of its sides the initials H. P., formed by an expert arrangement of black bricks set into the red wall, was the smoke-house, with the obvious uses and obscurer functions of which the boys were to become well acquainted, for it also entailed upon them various periodical tasks. When the "gammons" and the shoulders of pork were hung up to cure in this dark fastness, a pungent smoke, surcharged with creosote, had to be kept rising, an incense best produced from a smoldering fire of hickory sticks and corncobs, which combustibles, of chemic virtue, were supplied with somewhat of superstitious care. And in the smoke-house was deposited the pickling-vat, a huge hogshead of strong brine wherein the hams were treated before being cured by smoking, and in which the bacon was preserved. Owing to its dungeon-like, not to say infernal, suggestions, the smoke-house was utilized by the boys in ways that added a tang of melodramatic adventure to their sport. The murky cell was a good hiding-place, - an ideal cave for witches, an admirable robbers' den, a strong prison in which to confine captured "Indians," - a grotto in which gnomes and swart fairies might lurk, and a terrible chamber of ordeal in which to prove who could longest endure to be locked up enshrouded by the smothering acrid smoke, without calling for release from suffocation.

What further explorations and discoveries Tip and his dog may have made on that first morning, need not be detailed. Not until many days, weeks, and months had gone by did the boy feel himself to be altogether familiar with his changed abode and its accessories.

Family life in the new house, especially during cold weather, gathered about the two fireplaces, that of the kitchen and that of the front room. For several years the household managed to get along without a cooking-stove, and when one of those innovating inventions was at last received from a Dayton foundry where it was cast, the installation of it caused quite a stir and was witnessed by congratulating neighbors. Before its advent, boiling, frying, and baking were done on the glowing coals of the hearth, or by means of pots and kettles suspended over the fire from pothooks hung upon the swinging crane; and those convenient utensils, the cast-iron bake-kettle and the Dutch oven or "reflector," were also in common use.

Attractive indeed was the kitchen fire-place, with its savory associations, its culinary steams and appetizing odors of bubbling mush-pots, new hominy or samp,

rich succotash, buckwheat cakes, and pumpkin pies; but the vestal hearth and sacred altar of that rural home was the ingle which burned in the common sitting-room. The deep, wide fire-place, occupying large space in a corner of the room, had a broad hearth made by laying smooth-surfaced flag-stones, of irregular shapes, in a bed of sand; and the crevices between the stones formed convenient cozy harborage for domestic crickets, which nightly chirped with cheerful persistency that would have delighted the Peerybingles in Dickens's "Christmas Story." In the wall or jamb at the right side of the chimney was a square niche or recess called the stockhole. Though now obsolete, its very name forgotten, the useful stockhole was, in earlier days, a familiar feature of many a rural home. It served as a convenient receptacle for any small article in frequent demand, as a spool, a ball of yarn, a thimble, a husking-peg, a pair of candle-snuffers, or a bottle of ink. Just below the stockhole depended a turkey-wing with which to brush ashes from the hearth, and in the opposite chimney-corner stood a home-made broom, perhaps of Buckeye splint. Very important members of the household were the strong, homely fire-shovel, and her mate, the stout tongs with "his long legs and short thighs, little head and no eyes."

Seldom was the fire suffered to go out, but if, by chance, this misfortune happened, then, losing no time, someone, usually a boy, ran to the nearest neighbor's to "borrow fire," which Promethean element was conveyed either as live coals held in a shovel, or in the form of a burning brand plucked from the hearth, or a handful of ignited splinters and strips of hickory bark. The bearer of such a flambeau, running at full speed, might have been likened in fancy to a Greek torch-bearer of the ancient world.

The tinder-box, with accompanying flint and steel, not infrequently lent its enkindling spark to coax a ruddy blaze; and Lucifer matches, just coming into common use, could be purchased at the "store," costing twenty-five cents a hundred. Brown earthenware lamps, such as are to-day seen in the cabins of mountaineers in eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, furnished much of the light of other days for Ohio homes. In lieu of such primitive vessels, country folks improvised makeshift oil-lamps of even simpler form. It is related of the sister poets, Alice and Phoebe Cary, that in girlhood, when their home was at "Clovernook," near Cincinnati, they wrote many of their early poems by the glimmer of a lamp consisting of "a saucer of melted lard with a bit of rag for wick." Similar domestic contrivances were occasionally resorted to by Tip who, choosing to be alone on some nocturnal search or study, would steal away to the kitchen, or up the dark stairway to the garret, carrying his dimly-burning taper.

Candles, of course, were in general use, and many of these were of domestic manufacture. Tip often watched the process of making "tallowclips," and also, at a later period, the neater method of making candles, a half a dozen or a dozen at a time, by casting the tallow in a tin mold made for the purpose.

In the economics of farm life, a barn including horse-stable, cow-shed, and corn-crib, was of prime utility, and this indispensable structure had been roughly provided, in the shape of temporary log buildings, before Tip's father came into possession of the property. But so unsightly and so inadequate to the ordinary needs of husbandry were the rude shelter-houses erected for the exigency of original settlement, that it became one of the first pressing duties of the new proprietor to pull down the log cabins and replace them by a commodious barn of a more modern type. The great sills and beams for this all-important building were measured and fashioned in the woods, from trees carefully selected by the boss carpenter before they were felled. Here the timbers were hewn into shape by the broad-ax, and properly mortised and tenoned by means of auger and chisel, for their destined place in the frame. Here, also, on the very ground where the oaks grew from which they were made, the shingles were split with froe and mallet, and shaven with the drawing knife to the proper thickness by a skilled workman sitting astride a "shaving-horse." Tip followed with intense interest and ever increasing vigilant curiosity every process of the architecture, and with exultant satisfaction he saw the completed temple to Ceres, with its spacious threshing-floor, its bay, its mows for grain and hay, its bins, its stalls for the horses, and its rack for the comfortable foddering of cattle. Room was provided for the fanmill or windmill, which separated the chaff from the wheat; also for the corn-sheller and the cutting-box; for wagon, plow, harrow, pitchfork, graincradle, sickle, and scythe.

Mention need scarcely be made of the useful but not ornamental hen-roost, near the barn; nor of the cozy sheepfold and the various pens where swine were fed with corn on the cob, or summoned, grunting, to the slop-trough; nor of the sties in which the favored old sows and their numerous squealing children were segregated.

Near the dwelling-house, good old Hurtin Proud, the former owner of the place, had inclosed with palings a ground-space in which grew such vegetables, herbs, and hardy flowers as best pleased his homely tastes. This area in later years was transformed into one of the most beautiful of garden-plots. Under the constant loving care of Tip's mother and sisters, the dooryard was rapidly stocked with decorative trees and shrubs, snowball, lilac, burning-bush, and others, and the porch was so embowered in a luxuriant tangle of those domestic favored vines, the “Seven Sisters” and the “Baltimore Belle,” that the homestead came to be known throughout the neighborhood by the name of Rose Cottage.

North of the house and garden-plot there was a young orchard, the size of which was soon much increased by the setting out of a considerable number and variety of select fruit-trees, apple, cherry, and peach, purchased of the Shakers, at Union Village, near Lebanon. Tip hastened to make most intimate acquaintance with many enticing fruits, the familiar names of which give a color of poesy and romance to orchard nomenclature,-such charming descriptives, for example, as Prince's Early Harvest, Seek-

No-Further, Maiden's Blush, Belleflower, and Golden Pippin, distinguishing favorite varieties of apple, and, among the names of choice peaches, Red Rareripe, Honest John, and the Red-cheeked Melocotoon.

Two annual festivals were held in the heart and imagination of Tip and his brother and sisters: the first was in the season of bloom and fragrance, when the orchards looked and breathed Paradise;the other, in autumn, when the magic fingers of the frost wrought a wondrous change in almost every aspect of nature. With a visual delight resembling ecstasy the children beheld that most enchanting miracle of spring, the rapid florescence of the plum, the pear, and the cherry tree, with their snowy blossoms, and of the apple laden with flowers pink and white, and the peach tree glowing like a roseate cloud! The pageant which autumn brought to wood and field, to garden and orchard, was scarcely less impressive to the young people, who recognized in its magnificence of decay the forerunner of those coming "melancholy days," the "saddest of the year," of which Bryant had so beautifully sung.

As with the advent of spring were associated the delights of sugar-making, in the maple grove, so with the approach of cold weather in the fall were connected the pleasures attendant upon the time of apple-gathering and cider-making, when the routine of ordinary labor was relieved by many a frolic. Dozens of barrels of delicious juice were squeezed from the brown, dripping pomace by the crushing force of the huge rude press with its immense wooden screw turned by long levers; and countless gallons of cider were simmered to thick syrup, in which pared apples were later boiled (in their own rich blood) until transformed into that quintessence of pome, apple-butter.

This brief survey of some of the most conspicuous objects connected with the new homestead can only glimpse toward the sugar-camp, replete with its many peculiar attractions. A feature of the place, which, in Tip's mind at least, was of supreme importance, owing to the incalculable amount of pleasure it afforded him at all seasons of the year, was a small stream of water known by the undistinguishing name of the Run.

The Run was a spring-fed brook whose shallow current, clear as crystal, took its source from a grassy level in Lackey's woods, and, wandering through the farm from west to east, flowed in front of the cottage within a hundred feet of the threshold. In times of freshet this variable stream would rage and roar like a petty river, swelling and foaming with such destructive angry violence as to destroy fences and sweep away all the painstakenly constructed dams the boys had builded of sticks and stones plastered with mud, and all the little water-wheels nicely whittled out of pine, and all the tiny canoes and sailboats bravely launched upon the stormy waters. But in the periods of drought this streamlet would purl or creep along its laggard course scarce more than silvering its bed with a moist film hardly sufficient to allay the thirst of the crowd of

yellow-winged butterflies that settled on its margin. The Run never quite dried up and was always a playfellow who had nothing to do but to waste the idle hours. In summer-time the children waded in its tepid ripples, or gathered pebbles from its bed, or mint or yellow cowslip blossoms from its oozy edges; in winter they used to slide over its glassy surface or they wandered beside its crooked shore, never weary of looking at the ice-jewels formed by the play of the running water fretting against mossy stones, gnarled roots, and bunches of grass.

But most of all was the brook alluring because, as it forever ran twinkling and whispering on its way, it coaxed and dared Tip and his adventurous elder sister to follow wherever it tempted their feet. Often the truant children, starting from its bubbling origin, would trace its windings on past the cottage, through. the sugar-camp, past Throckmorton's stone spring-house, then across the Minktown road at the point where lay a huge bowlder of the period of the glacial drift, then into the deep valley of the Big Woods where it joined Newman's Run, which stream pursued its devious course for several miles and at last mingled its current with the waters of the Little Miami River. One attraction of mysterious interest, not far from the creek, was an Indian mound, where the children went to seek for relics of the Stone Age, flint arrow-beads, and, perhaps, ornaments of polished obsidian.

Never did there exist a grander botanical garden and general museum of natural history than the Big Woods afforded. In it, at the several seasons of the year, the young ramblers gathered a wonderful variety of wild flowers, spring-beauties, anemones, violets, the puccoon, the adder-tongue, the bluebell, and the columbine. They took curious pains to learn the haunts and qualities of columbo, spikenard, Solomon's seal, ginseng, hoarhound, snake-root, and elecampane, of spicebrusb, prickly-ash, Indian turnip, boneset, and comfrey. They found in the Big Woods, beech-drops, sweet-knots, and marvelous kinds of mushrooms and lichens. There also grew haws (black and red), and wild grapes and wild goose berries, and, best of all, flay-berry trees bearing delicate fruit; and there, in due season, was gathered store of hickory-nuts and walnuts and butternuts.

Hard by the northern bank of Newman's Run, in the very heart of the woods, Tip and his sister discovered a gigantic hollow sycamore, with a fantastic arched opening which served as a door to the dusky interior, which was capacious enough to afford ample room for half a dozen children whenever they chose to huddle there for shelter during the continuance of a summer shower. This delightful house of nature was furnished, in sylvan fashion, with seats of stone, after the loamy floor had been covered with a carpet of thick soft moss; and no costly rug from the Orient was of rarer pattern, or could have given such a sense of luxury to these young recluses of the greenwood, as did that living, fragrant cloth of green and gold.

Chapter IV – The Big Woods

In the days of Tip's early boyhood the forests of Ohio were fairly well stocked with game. The wild deer had not yet been exterminated, and, occasionally, in hilly sections of the State, a brown bear, that solitary forager, skulked about in search of fruit or honey to please his fastidious appetite. Large game was especially abundant in the woods of Indiana, as the boy learned from two of his uncles who, as pioneers, had purchased land and built houses in the Hoosier State, and who made annual visits to Ohio, bringing in their covered wagons such commodities as hoop-poles, venison, swamp-cranberries, and, alas, the "shaking ague," which no amount of quinine could cure. These brave and well-beloved uncles, John and Britton, had interesting stories to tell of struggle and hardship in the sparsely settled region whither they had gone to "grow up with the country,"where "Molly Brooks" and other half-breed Indians still lingering, illustrated by their squalid habits the natural bent of the aborigines.

Though it never chanced that Tip caught sight of a deer, a bear, a wolf, or a panther, running wild in southern Ohio, he had many opportunities to observe various small indigenous quadrupeds, as well as wild fowl, in their natural haunts. Wild turkeys, geese, and ducks were not uncommon; migratory pigeons, pausing from their flight, made rendezvous by countless thousands in the trees on his father's farm, sometimes covering so thickly the boughs upon which they alighted that Tip had only to fire an old shot-gun anywhere toward the sky to bring down a shower of birds. Frequently the red fox was seen furtively gliding in search of prey, and the weatherwise ground-hog or wood-chuck was often captured in his hibernating burrow. Opossums, polecats, minks, and weasels were so numerous and so thievish that hen-roosts had to be warily protected from their ravages: often the squawking of frightened chickens roused the farmer from midnight slumber and summoned him to the barnyard, carrying in one hand a lantern of perforated tin and in the other some hastily snatched up firearm.

The excitement of raccoon hunting by night, with dogs and gun, was much enjoyed by youths of a sportsmanlike turn. Trees in which the pursued animal took refuge were chopped down by light of a bonfire; and the eager hounds rushing to seize the anticipated game even while the tree was falling, were sometimes crushed to death under its trunk or limbs.

Skill in shooting and in taking care of guns, in making ramrods and in molding bullets, was considered part of the necessary attainment of every accomplished man or boy. There was at least one gunsmith in every country neighborhood. Tip's brother was the envied possessor of an excellent rifle, and also of a handsome shot-gun which he bought at second-hand from one Washington Noggle. This memorable fowling-piece, the stock of which was of hard, polished, curly maple, was marked by a silver

plate on which were engraved the words *Henry Clay*. Whether "Henry Clay" was the name of the gun, or whether the gun had once belonged to the celebrated Kentucky statesman, was a matter of much conjecture. Whatever may have been its history, it was certainly held in political high regard by its new owner, and nobody doubted that it was a faithful Whig, even though it might never have been handled by Harry of the West. Tip often carried "Henry Clay" while his brother bore the heavier rifle, as the boys trudged all day through the enchanting intricacies of the Big Woods, hunting squirrels, and almost unconsciously schooling themselves in every cunning secret of wood-craft. Their bunting seldom failed to load their with an overburden of squirrels, gray or red, which were strung on strips of pawpaw bark and were "toted" over the shoulder like a traveler's pack. Usually far more game was brought home than the young sportsmen had the patience to skin and prepare for the skillet. When the snows of winter covered the ground, the sport of tracking and catching rabbits took the place of squirrel hunting.

At the period of which we now write, before the forest had lost its primeval character, nature's economy supplied for man directly from her wild stores more than one luxury, "without money and without price." She prepared apiaries in the trunks of trees, and her woods, like the rocks of the Holy Land, flowed with honey gathered from a thousand blossomy sources. Tip remembers that while wandering in the woods of May or June he often listened to a mysterious, elusive music overhead, like invisible Ariel's "sweet airs," - a murmuring sound among the tree-tops, which he knew to be the melodious hum of swarming bees.

Other swarming and stinging insects, which manufactured neither wax nor honey, had their nests in the woods, and these, if molested, would fly in fierce multitudes, and attack, with poisonous stings, the man or the beast that had ventured to disturb them. Sometimes it happened that an army of "yellow-jackets," stirred up by the tread of a horse or a dog, would torture the poor animal to a frenzy. Most to be dreaded of all such winged foes were those formidable hornets whose nests, looking like small balloons of coarse brown paper, the boys frequently came across, either hidden in a hollow tree or hanging on some bush. These malignant insects were easily provoked to dart with swift force directly for their human enemy's face, and a sting from one of them was exceedingly painful.

Vague suggestions of danger and of fear haunted the deeper forest shades even in broad daylight, especially at times when a susceptible and credulous mood came over a boy wandering alone in solitary places unfamiliar to his feet. Bloodcurdling narratives were often spun at evening firesides by "old settlers" of lively imagination, who would relate what purported to be personal adventures with wildcats and with other night-prowling creatures of glowing eye-balls, - especially with the "painter," that perilous beast which always deluded the hunter by plaintive cries exactly as of a

moaning child; and stories ancient as the hills were told, and half-believed, of hoopsnakes, and whip-snakes, and deadly moccasins. And there were even worse things to be encountered in the woods than ravenous beasts and fanged serpents, so these inventors of marvels "calculated," with solemn shakes of the head. Tip heard a graybeard farmer tell, with serious air and bated breath, that a "Bosjesman" had been seen clambering and crouching among the branches of a shell-bark hickory in the loneliest part of the swamp-woods on the road to Utica. What a "Bosjesman" might be or do, no one could tell, but Tip conjectured that in all probability it was something between a gorilla and Sinbad's Old Man of the Mountain, and that it was particularly fond of the taste of cowardly blood. Soon after hearing the farmer's hoaxing story, the boy was sent on an errand to Utica, and as he rode by the swamp-woods he felt very much as Tam O'Shanter must have felt,

"Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares."

But even more terror-inspiring than any species of living animal, - panther, snake, or Bosjesman, - however uncouth or monstrous, - more to be dreaded than these, in Tip's fancy, were such intangible things as jack-o'-lanterns, witches, and ghosts; and though the lad did not believe in these, and while he scouted the possibility of their existence, he was influenced, against his will, by the well-authenticated hobgoblins of other people older than himself and no less reasonable. Therefore let it not be set down as particularly depreciative of his courage or good sense that sometimes, to the boy wandering alone in the woods, there came moments when

"A sudden gust of childhood's superstitions
Blew through his memory, and, as he sped,
A darkling company of apparitions
Chased him with ghostly whispers of the dead."

Such fits of blind terror were of seldom occurrence, the impressions produced by the forest being almost invariably of a tranquilizing kind, and often such as imparted inexpressible joy and spiritual exaltation. However, Tip did not escape the usual experience even of the most clear-headed people, who, astray in a thick and pathless woods, become bewildered and move helplessly in a maze, unable to determine their whereabouts. Just as one learns to observe the course of his bad dreams and to wait with uneasy hope the moment of awakening, so the lost boy endures with a certain dogged interest his temporary confusion and distress, dizzily notes the brook running in the wrong direction, wonders why the sun is setting in the

north, and hopes creation will regulate itself in time to save him from utter paralysis and the pangs of slow starvation.

It is impossible for words to exaggerate the amount and intensity of the pleasure which Tip and his brother enjoyed together in the woods. There was an irresistible charm, a mystic and almost supernatural fascination which drew their feet habitually to tramp and loiter, to ramble and explore, up hill and down dale, under the shade of majestic trees, usually in the daytime, but now and then in the darkness and solemn hush of night. During these nocturnal excursions John took delight in studying the weird aspects and peculiar sounds characteristic of the mysterious and obscure forest. He would call Tip's attention to the loamy odors of the dank, leaf-sheltered covert, so unlike the breezy fragrance of the open fields in sunshine. He would answer the distant bay of a dog or the bark of a fox, and tell his young brother about the habits of owls and bats. From him Tip also learned much concerning the haunts and habits of flying-squirrels, raccoons, opossums, weasels, minks, and polecats. John led the way to ravines where might be found decaying stumps and logs glowing dully with what he called "foxfire," which, he explained, was wonderfully different from ordinary fire, for though it gave out light, it was always cold, and instead of being quenched, was only made to burn brighter, by being soaked in water. With chips of this phosphorescent substance which they carried home, the wood-wise adventurers rubbed their hands and faces, thus rendering themselves miraculously luminous, and altogether too unearthly for their scaled sisters to look upon without screaming.

Perhaps in no other region of equal area on the earth's wide surface did nature produce a greater variety of useful and beautiful trees than grew and flourished in rich profusion on the hills and plains of the Ohio Valley at the period when the settlement of the Old Northwest was begun. No modern art of conservation can restore to their pristine grandeur the magnificent forests which Christopher Gist, the surveyor, explored one hundred and sixty years ago, and which afterwards witnessed the back-woods adventures of Daniel Boone. Photography was invented too late to preserve upon its magic films any glimpse of the original Ohio woods, the best authentic pictures of which were painted only in words, by some of our pioneer writers who strove to make the Western groves

"Live in description, and look green in song."

Our literature contains no truer delineation of the primeval forest, and no more genuine reproduction of the feeling produced by the reality of it, than are happily to be found in the elaborate verse of the pastoral, "Miami Woods," by the pioneer poet, William Davis Gallagher, who, with the fidelity of an art as true as it is simple, transferred very nature to the printed page in melodious lines from which the following

characteristic passage is quoted

> "Around me here rise up majestic trees
> That centuries have nurtured: graceful elms,
> Which interlock their limbs among the clouds;
> Dark-columned walnuts, from whose liberal store
> The nut-brown Indian maids their baskets fill'd
> Ere the first Pilgrims knelt on Plymouth Rock;
> Gigantic sycamores, whose mighty arms
> Sheltered the Redman in his wigwam prone,
> What time the Norsemen roamed our chartless seas;
> And towering oaks, that from the subject plain
> Sprang when the builders of tile tumuli
> First disappeared, and to the conquering hordes
> Left these, the dim traditions of their race
> That rise around, in many a form of earth
> Tracing the plain, but shrouded in the gloom
> Of dark, impenetrable shades, tbat fall
> From the far centuries."

In the days of the pioneers, as in a remote age and country alluded to in the Old Testament, "a man was famous according as he lifted up axes upon thick trees." Now for more than one hundred and twenty years a relentless war has been waged against the once grand and glorious forests of Ohio, such as those within whose green glooms Tip and his brother rambled as wild and free as a couple of young Indians might have roamed there not half a century before.

Of necessity, the first work for the new settler in Good Old Times, was to "chop out the night and chop in the morn," - to make a "clearing" for his cabin and his garden, and to extend, as rapidly as he could, his arable domain. What a Herculean labor for the axman to redeem a field from thraldom to an army of gigantic trees, has often been recorded in verse and in prose; but we doubt if any one who has not observed or participated in the slow and toilsome process of effecting a clearing in the woods, can have an adequate idea of the difficulty which such a task entailed.

As in other wars, so in the fight against trees, fire followed the ruin wrought by steel. Burning log-heaps were to be seen, in the dry season, on every farm, and the wasteful sacrifice of timber was renewed year after year. This wholesale cremation of logs, stumps, and huge brush-heaps was a destructive enterprise just suited to a boy's fancy. Is the peculiar, savage pleasure which people take in watching the ravages of a conflagration part of our primitive nature, like the instinct for hunting and for war?

Perhaps there is no man living who is not susceptible to the charm of fire, and who would not take satisfaction in kindling a heap of dry brush-wood to see the smoke curling skyward and to hear the crackle. and roar of billowing flames.

Strong the muscle and steady the trained nerve which directed the woodman's ringing stroke in the strenuous art of properly felling a huge poplar or a mammoth oak, and only a small number of stalwart champions gained reputation for both skill and rapidity in this mighty business. Tip recalls with what thrilling suspense he watched the process, - admired the precision of each flashing fall of the ax, saw the white chips fly, and waited breathlessly until, when a deep notch had been cut on either side of the steadily poised trunk and the proud leafy column seemed to stand firm only by virtue of its own dignity, a scarcely perceptible tremor shook its foliage, its high top swayed, and crashing down through the broken arms of its affrighted comrades, the doomed tree thundered to the ground, - the tragic close of perhaps five hundred years of growth and triumphant monarchy! There lay the prostrate pride of the forest, - mere lumber,-soon to be despoiled of its green boughs, to be hacked into cordwood, split into fence-rails, sliced into timbers and planks for the building of houses and barns.

Just as wheat and corn were taken to the gristmill and there exchanged for flour and meal, logs were hauled to the saw-mill either to be sold for cash or bartered for sawn boards. What boy who has lived in a wooded country, needs have described for him the stout, low log-wagon with its “boom” and clanking length of iron chain which bound the saw-log to its funeral car? Perhaps some reader of this page may have assisted in rolling a bulky section of some great oak, ash, poplar, or walnut tree, upon the log-wagon, and, while the squat vehicle, was slowly drawn by an ox team, he may have ridden astride the huge bole, to the mill where it was delivered over to the teeth of the fierce vertical saw, which, with furious execution, tore through its very heart. The fallen giants of the woods always commanded Tip's melancholy sympathy. He sometimes even shed tears when a favorite forest tree was cut down, and he followed its dead trunk, like a mourner, to the saw-mill, which he hated with a respectful anger mixed with admiration and awe, mingled with something akin to compassion.

Chapter V - Going to School

When first domiciled with the rest of the family in his new home, Tip, though quite young, was old enough to pay some attention to the talk he heard about the Ridgeville District School, to which his brother John was immediately sent and which he himself expected soon to attend. The teacher was one William Blank, familiarly styled Billy, a personage much renowned for his mathematical knowledge, and physically remarkable on account of a muscular defect which constrained him to hold his head constantly on one side after the fashion of the Laputans described in "Gulliver's Travels." Moreover, the pedagogue was blind of one eye. Though never a pupil of this learned gentleman, Tip has a faint recollection of once having seen him standing before a small blackboard upon which he was making figures with a piece of chalk. Other and more definite memories of Mr. William Blank, if Tip ever had them, have altogether faded from his mind, and the famed mathematician vanishes like a cloud in the dim atmosphere of the Past.

After a short time, the family being conveniently established, our Boy, though subjected at first to some oversight and counsel exercised by his brother and his elder sister Newell, was gradually initiated into the mysteries, privileges, restraints, enjoyments, and grievances of his first schooling, and into the experience inseparable from daily association with different kinds of boys and girls in a petty social world hitherto unknown to him. In order to reach the house of instruction he had to walk a distance of nearly two miles, along a level road bordered by wood-land. The schoolhouse, in the midst of a very small and scattering village, was a surviving specimen of veritable pioneer log-architecture, in which the children of the early settlers had learned their a—b—c's. It had no windows to speak of; its heavy deal door swung on strap-hinges and was fastened by means of a padlock; the floor was of puncheons, uneven, and somewhat decayed; the scanty furniture consisted of a few rude desks and rough benches.

Presiding with a somewhat formal but nowise strict control over a small flock of pupils gathered together in this log-cabin, was an amiable gentleman, gray-haired and fatherly, whom Tip at first held in high reverence, but by and by began to regard with a certain pensive feeling of gratitude mingled with something akin to gratitude. Under the tuition of "old Linus" the lad made such progress that he quickly learned to read in the Second Reader, and to spell in a Blue Spelling Book; but he was embarrassed, at the beginning of his scholarly career, by strained relations with the class to which he was assigned. This class consisted of himself and one other boy, a good-natured fellow, endowed with an exceedingly wide mouth,-who grinned perpetually, looking down from a superior altitude on Tip, than whom he was fully a head taller. Secretly but earnestly the hypersensitive urchin besought old Linus to put him into some other

class, explaining delicately that he could not endure the largeness or the mobility of Alexander's mouth; and the compliant master, amused by the aesthetic petition, transferred the sufferer according to his request. But, when next called to the floor to recite, Tip was chagrined to find he had jumped from the frying-pan into the fire. The new class, kindly created for his relief, consisted, like the former organization, of only two members, himself and a fat, giggling girl named Emelyne, whose saucy black eyes proved far more aggressive and devouring than Alexander's extravagant but well-meaning mouth. In deep confusion the boy once more appealed to Linus, saying that, after all, he believed he could learn more in a class of his own sex than in one of mixed character, whereupon he was returned to the class of Alexander, in which he usually stood next to head.

Old Linus belonged to that antiquated order of pedagogues to whom the name of "preceptor" properly applies. He might have been monitor for any of the exemplary boys in Miss Edgeworth's "Moral Tales." In his methods and ideals, he kept alive some excellent traditions of colonial modes of training children. He was careful to teach good manners, and went so far as to require his pupils to imitate what he supposed to be the polite usages of people of "quality" and even of those who dwelt in castles and courts. Before beginning and after closing each recitation, every class, its members ranged in orderly rank, saluted the master with a becoming reverence. This preliminary being over, other ceremonies followed. All the boys formed a sort of military line, facing the girls arranged opposite in a seemly row, and when the word "Obeisance" was pronounced, the young cavaliers responded with an elaborate bow, receiving in return a profound curtesy from the ladies. Nor was the practice of conventional etiquette restricted to polite rehearsals on the puncheon floor of the humble log schoolhouse. The boys were admonished to practice gentlemanly deportment while on the road to and from school, and, above all, never to neglect the gallant habit of lifting the hat, on meeting a woman.

Amiable and urbane as he was, and though possessed of efficient qualities, perhaps Linus relied rather too fondly on the sufficiency of outward drill and automatic manners and morals, as many other teachers have done before and since his day. He made the mistake of relegating to machinery what can be accomplished only by direct action of the vital spirit. One of his mechanical agencies which did not accomplish the purpose of its inventor, was a wooden paddle on one side of which was painted in capital letters the word IN, and on the other side, the word OUT. This reversible small signboard was suspended from a nail driven into the door-frame near the latch of the schoolhouse door. The theory of the device was plausible: whenever a pupil left the room, he was expected to adjust the paddle so as to tell the school that somebody was out, and when he returned he was supposed to change the signal so as to assure all that everybody was in, the rule being that only one at a time should be out. Like all human

inventions, this ingenious implement was liable to abuse. A boy about to make his exit, would give the paddle a complete turn, making it falsely say IN, thus tempting others to follow him and repeat the easy trick, until, in a very orderly and noiseless manner, half the school would glide forth into the yard, though the demure wooden governor unblushingly reported all present, while the master nodded over a book, or busied himself decorating with leathern spectacles and a conical paper cap the sulky dunce on the stool of disgrace. On a memorable afternoon in May, the schoolmaster fell asleep in his chair, and his mischievous flock, every lamb of it, escaped to the green grass and pleasant sunshine out of doors. When the master awoke and looked out of the narrow back window, he beheld a picturesque scene: All the girls were in a farm-wagon which chanced to stand idle near the playground, and all the boys were pulling the vehicle towards a grassy, downward slope! The rat-tat of the ferule on the window-sash summoned the romping truants to their desks and lessons; the decorum of the hour was perfect; and the paddle for once told the truth, displaying the right monosyllable. The pupils were IN.

Tip was very young when the rude log schoolhouse in which good, kind old Linus taught the country lads to make their gallant "obeisance," and the girls to drop a graceful "curtesy," was pulled down to give place to a modest church, and a new schoolhouse was erected near the edge of a pleasant strip of woodland about a quarter of a mile east of the village. The school was transferred to this new building, and was put in the charge of a new teacher, - a well-born, well-bred young gentleman from New England, who knew Latin, and whose mode of sounding the letter *a*, and of suppressing the trill of the letter *r*, created surprise and prejudicial comment, until it was discovered that his so-called "Yankee brogue" implied no defect of brain or of heart.

To the new schoolhouse and the new master, Tip, still very averse to education, was promptly convoyed. He had been but a few days in subjection to the unpleasantly severe rules and regulations of the stranger from Massachusetts, when an adventure befell, which he never forgot, and which involved with him a little girl whom the gentle reader may know by the name of Romania. She was a very pretty child, daintily attired in a pink frock with a white pinafore, and the boy, whose restless gaze chanced to wander across the middle aisle to the girls' side of the schoolroom, encountered her large, innocent blue eyes gazing in his direction. The smile which met his, that moment, in friendly greeting, seemed to reveal that the little maid was, like himself, a comparative novice in school experience; and he felt that she and he were alien to the usages of that arbitrary and uncongenial world, and that they sympathized with each other. Scarcely had their eyes exchanged "speechless messages" before Tip was aware of the clamor and commotion which told him that "intermission" had begun, and, hurrying out, he soon discovered Romania standing shyly aloof from the boisterous

groups swarming and storming over the playground. Abruptly he spoke to her, and something very like the following colloquy took place:

"You don't like to go to school, do you?"

"No. This is the first I ever went. - I'm going to run home now at recess. Won't you come along with me?"

"Yes; I'll go: where is your home?"

"Over yonder, not very far," she said, pointing the way; "we'll go across the field. Come on, I'll show you. - We have ripe cherries and Hormel apples."

Off the unapprehensive truants hastened together, out of the school-yard, across the wagon-road, into an open field through which a foot-path led to an orchard and finally to a cottage with a low porch. The girl went into the house, and soon returned to the porch, accompanied by her mother, who, with a look of surprise, asked:

"What does this mean, Romania? Who is this boy? Is anything the matter, my child? Why did you come home?"

"Nothing, mother; only it is play-time, and I told him we had ripe cherries and apples."

"But who is this strange boy?" inquired the lady, smiling.

"I don't know; but he is nice, and I like him. He don't want to go to school, either."

Tip gave his name, not relishing the idea of being described as "this strange boy."

The tempting fruit was forthcoming; then the mother, in some anxiety, but with a good-humored expression which was not lost on the boy, said:

"Now hurry back to school."

Hand in hand the children started on their return across the open field, but they took a different path, well-known to Romania, which led them away from the direct course and near to a large, "girdled" tree, under which grew a thick sod of wild violets, a wonderful show! - the ground was carpeted with blue! - Tip never saw, before or since, so many violets in blossom all at one time and in one place! The children plucked these "Johnny-jump-ups," by handfuls, and, quite forgetful of school, sat down on the sward, and, counting out the violets into equal bunches, made believe these dainty flowers were soldiers, and pitted them, one against another, pair by pair, forcing them to lock their slender necks together, and then pulling their stems until one, or sometimes both, of the tiny contestants lost its head. It turned out that every one of Tip's brave blue-bonnets went down, overcome by the superior strength or skill of the enemy's plucky fighters, and Romania came off victress, with at least a dozen untried champions in her lap. - Now it occurred to the loiterers, in a flash, that they ought to be in school! What would the sedate, stern new master say and do? What would Tip's brother and sister think?

Arising hastily from the fragrant battleground, the idlers, with fast-beating hearts, ran to the fence which separated the field from the road, clambered over its high rails, which were surmounted by "stakes and riders," hurried across the road and over the stile which brought them into the school-yard, and slowly advanced to the closed door. Palpitating with excitement, they paused to take breath and summon courage. There was only one thing to do! Tip softly opened the door and stepped within, - Romania timidly pacing behind him. Forty pairs of eyes were focussed upon the tardy innocents. The lad made straight for his assigned desk, mortified and perplexed. A giggle ran from girl to girl, and the boys exploded into derisive merriment. Romania took her seat, blushing scarlet, and then began to cry. This caused a sudden lull in the laughing and noise, and it seemed to Tip that all the girls were gazing curiously at him, and all the boys staring in silence upon Romania.

The only punishment or unpleasant feeling suffered by Tip, in consequence of the episode of the violets, save this of being laughed at by the school, was a still more aggravating case of teasing which greatly angered and disgusted him. No sooner was the school dismissed than a lubberly boy, with a prodigious head, - a half-silly fellow who went by the nickname of "Balloon head," - winked at him, and drawled out: " You are sweet on her."

The acquaintance between Tip and Romania was destined to be of short duration, owing to the circumstance that after she had attended the school for only a few weeks her folks removed with her somewhere to the "Far West," and thus she vanished from the life and the knowledge of the boy with whom she had played so happily on that pleasant morning when cherries were ripening and violets were in bloom.

Becoming accustomed to the routine of school life, and being of a sociable temperament, Tip naturally fell into acquaintance, more or less familiar, with most of the boys and girls whom he necessarily met daily, in the schoolroom or on the playground. Inevitably he formed friendships and enmities, had his sweethearts and his rivals, and shared in the petty romance, comedy, and tragedy of the groping, passionate period of transition from childhood to youth. Among the associations of those simple, sincere days of unsophisticated, though intense and earnest, country experiences, may be recorded a typical instance, the heroine of which was another rural maid, who by the chance of propinquity succeeded Romania in Tip's comradeship without supplanting her in his equal affections. In his diurnal pilgrimages to school, along the public road, the boy had to pass a gate opening into a lane leading to a farmhouse where dwelt one of his girl classmates who, every morning, with reading-book and small willow basket in hand, came down the lane and out through the gate, on her way to school. One morning it happened that Tip was passing the gate just at the moment when Lydia opened it, and the two walked on together, talking very

unreservedly, telling each other of their likes and dislikes at school, and of their enjoyments and troubles at home. Their friendship grew rapidly; a common stock of interest and neighborhood gossip increased their intimacy; and, as a consequence, almost every evening, after school was out, they managed to steal away, unseen, as they imagined, and to saunter along, side by side, till they came to the gate where Lydia had to turn off into the lane. They invented a method by which to regulate the chances of meeting in the morning, their simple device being to place a cobblestone upon a rail of the zigzag fence near the gateway at which they parted for the night. If she should go by this trysting place before he did, of a morning, she would remove the stone; if he got there first, he was to remove it. The result of the compact was to make him rise early and start to school betimes - he having a distance of two miles to go. Occasionally, to his sad disappointment, the stone was not to be seen when he looked for it in its assigned place, and in such case he went on lonesomely, sometimes blaming his own tardiness, sometimes vexed because Lydia had been in so much haste. As a rule, however, he was ahead of time, and the trusty stone would lie for weeks untouched, keeping its amiable secret, while regularly as the sun rose and set, the congenial pair wended to school together every morning, and returned together every evening. And so their education progressed very agreeably, for both confessed that they "liked each other best," but no further courtship was solicited or paid excepting that which was implied in the exchange of valentines and of carnelian rings, or in the fact that Tip once gave Lydia a beautiful jumping-rope which he cut with his own big-blade knife from a wild grape-vine which had fastened its clinging tendrils to the branches of her favorite black-haw tree.

It would do injustice to the temperament of Tip to conclude that he was overpartial to the company of the "gentler sex." He would have resented, even with blows of his far from pugilistic fist, any imputation that he belonged to the infatuate class of "gal-boys," whom he held in contempt. Nevertheless he was approaching that period of life which brings to the blood those Wordsworthian

> "Slight shocks of young love-liking interspersed,
> Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,
> And tingled through the veins."

On the boisterous playground he took his unavoidable risk of being crushed under the multiplied weight of a dozen bigger fellows using him as the foundation of the living pile in the game of "More on the Saw-mill"; or of being flung to a terrible distance with dangerous velocity if he dared accept the outermost place in the centrifugal ring, when playing "Crack the Whip"; or of being knocked breathless by a hard ball in "Sockabout"; or of suffering his share of knocks and bruises on the shins

whenever he ventured to participate in the merciless game of old-fashioned English "Hockey."

Of course Tip learned to climb trees; to hurl stones from a leathern sling; to swim, to wrestle, and to fight with friendly antagonists of about his own size, on proper provocation, and when in due form the chip had been knocked from his shoulder. But he was not of a bellicose disposition, and only a sense of honor inculcated by the prevailing code, or a blind frenzy of rage, could induce him to go to war. His predilections were rather toward Letters than Arms.

Under the tuition of the Yankee Schoolmaster he soon found himself taking a lively interest in all that was going on educationally. He had learned to read from toy-books before starting to school to good old Master Linus. He had listened to poems and romances, read aloud by his father. Books therefore were no new thing to him. He was acquainted with the titles and, to some extent, with the contents of the text-books of his brother and sister, especially with John's well-thumbed copy of "Pike's Arithmetic." John was no bookworm, yet he liked some kinds of literature, especially - narratives of action and adventure. Among his favorite stories were "The Castle of Otranto," "The Three Spaniards," and "Thaddeus of Warsaw." Every volume that John perused became a novel, because he read with a lively creative imagination. It was therefore that to his mind "Pike's Arithmetic," according to the guiding rules of which he "ciphered" at school, was replete with stirring incidents and dramatic suggestions. He found matter of speculation in the Rule of Three, and fascinating mystery in Vulgar Fractions. There were to him exciting possibilities in calculating Loss and Gain, and in fixing the proper allowance for Tare and Tret. Alligation had the complexity of a plot, and Permutation demonstrated facts less probable than the stories of Munchausen or of Sinbad. To pore over the tables of exchange, on Pike's learned page, was to travel, mentally, in far countries and to enrich one's imaginary coffers with crowns, pistoles, ducats, crusadoes, florins, and rix-dollars. As in a novel, so in Pike, the most entrancing chapters came toward the finis. The "Promiscuous Questions," which John sometimes read aloud for the edification and astonishment of Tip, gave themes for much lively conversation, eliciting many puzzling inquiries and venturous answers. The boys took a personal interest in the several characters whose extraordinary doing was tersely vouched for in the problems: the Vintner who mixed 20 gallons of Port wine, at 5s. 4d. per gallon, with 12 gallons of White wine, at 5s, per gallon, 30 gallons of Lisbon, at 6s. per gallon, and 20 gallons of Mountain, at 4s. 6d. per gallon; and sold the mixture at a shrewd profit; the person who said he had twenty children, and that it happened there was a year and a half between their ages;-the gentleman who had two silver cups of unequal weight, having one cover for both; and the enterprising merchant who shipped to Jamaica 550 pair of stockings and 460 yards of stuff, for which he received in return 46 cwt. 3 qrs. of sugar and 1570 lb. of indigo! - These

persons and transactions were as real to the credulous young arithmeticians as were the village storekeepers, Zeke Mulford and Sam Graham,, with their dry-goods, hardware, queensware, and boots and shoes.

There was no getting along in Arithmetic, nor, indeed, in any branch, without a slate. This article was a prime necessity and must be supplied even before laying in a bottle of blue ink and a stock of goose-quills.

As soon as Tip's busy career as a "scholar" was fairly launched, he went, in company with John and another expert, to Zeke Mulford's store to purchase the indispensable slate. The estimated price of this article, two "bits," the eager lad carried tied up in the corner of a red bandanna handkerchief. Alas! Mulford had sold his last slate! They might, he said, try Rooney Crane's place. Rooney Crane kept a toy-and-candy shop to which boys and girls resorted to buy sugar-kisses or sticks of licorice or a penny jews'-harp. The three boys rushed in upon the solitary gentleman where he sat placidly smoking a long-stemmed clay pipe." Had he any slates?" John asked, with the air of one who had large patronage to bestow. Rooney brought out from under the counter a pile of slates of different sizes. John and the other expert examined with tedious care each and every slate in the lot, testing the frame for flaws of joint or defects of shape, trying the surface, now on one side, then on the other, with pencils hard and pencils soft, pricing and quibbling with the price, until the weary merchant, quite tired out, sat down on a stool and resumed his smoking, leaving his customers to make up their minds, if they possibly could. John conducted the critical business with much solemnity and grave self-importance. At last his choice fixed upon a slate which, he remarked, was perhaps as good as one could expect to find in so small a town: you might do better in Cincinnati, but this seemed really a very fair slate. But now the other big boy, who had come along for the sole purpose of giving the benefit of his counsel, raised a serious objection. He feared there was something wrong,-doubted whether the mineral tablet they were about to accept was the real stuff it pretended to be, or was but a cheap imitation.

"Look'e here," said he, "I don't see any green spot: there must be a round, green spot somewhere on the slate, and it must show just the same on both sides, or your slate's no account."

"That's so," admitted John, "I wonder I didn't think of that."

He laid the slate down and selected another which plainly revealed the essential vein of green.

The brothers learned much from their schoolmates that perhaps the teacher did not know and that their text-books certainly did not impart. Boyhood moves in a world of its own, uses a language seldom recorded in type, communicates its lore and cherishes its superstitions with a jealous freemasonry which ignores the wisdom of maturity. Tip was soon initiated into such mysterious facts as that if growing wheat

chances to be cropt off by grazing cattle, though it may sprout up again, it will not then be wheat, but cheat or chess; that a hair from a horse's tail, kept for an indefinite time in a tub of rainwater, will turn into a snake; that however thoroughly a garter-snake be slain, its tail will not die until after sunset; that the cat is always prowling around the cradle in order to get a chance to suck the baby's breath; that if you touch a toad, warts will inevitably appear on your hands, and that these can be destroyed by various modes of charm and witchcraft; and that the skull of a raccoon possesses miraculous curative virtues, such as the power of removing tumors and cancers.

Dream-books were devoutly believed in by many, and Fortune-Tellers, whether in the form of printed books, blind beggars, or wandering gypsies, extracted secret pennies from the pocket of ignorant wonder.

Not a few persistent superstitions held sway with the boys on the school playgrounds and in the woods and fields. A familiar instance is afforded by the method to which Tip, though skeptical, resorted more than once, when in search of a lost arrow or ball. The seeker for the lost or undiscovered object spat upon a chip, which was then flung straight upward, with the magic injunction

> "Spit, spit, spy!
> Don't tell me no lie!
> Tell me where that ball is at."

The direction which the falling chip took was watched with breathless attention, and the vigilant search in the quarter thus indicated sometimes led to the finding of the ball. The innumerable times when the experiment failed were not regarded as invalidating the magic law.

The Yankee master, though he sometimes let slip from his educated tongue a down-eastern provincialism which caused a smile of wonderment to spread over the faces of his pupils, had frequent occasion to observe and correct errors which corrupted the composite speech of the school. Boys and girls from unbookish families persisted in solecisms and mispronunciations habitual to them from childhood and inveterate in their parents, who had imported into the community from different states various and peculiar violations of good English usage. Some there were who changed the proper sound of *oi*, in words like boil, spoil, roil, into long *i*, pronouncing them *bile*, *spile*, and *rile*; and who would speak of *histing* a liberty pole, *jining* the church, and *pinting* the finger of scorn. They would say "*drap* the corn," "*gether* the *crap*," "*rensh* the clothes," "feed the *critters*," "stuff the *sassage*," and "take a *cheer* and *set* down." In the words, purse, nurse curse, and the like, the r-sound was often suppressed, and the words became *pus*, *nus*, *cus*, but in other cases an *r* was introduced for euphony; wash, for instance, becoming *warsh*; mush, *mursh*; and wamus, *warmus*. Many words ending

in *o* or *ow*, changed the correct sound of the final syllable into *er*, and such regular forms as tomato, potato, became *tomater*, *potater*; and similarly came into use: *feller*, *swaller*, *shadder*, *taller*, *meader*, *yeller* or *yaller*, and a long list more. Other survivals, contractions, elisions, and phonetic modifications, more or less arbitrary, lent to the utterance of certain of the country-folk a quaintness such as has been so delightfully appropriated for homely, humorous, and sometimes pathetic effects, in recent literature, especially in the felicitous dialect poems of James Whitcomb Riley. In the Buckeye State as in the Hoosier State, it was not uncommon to hear an elm called an *ellum*; a chimney, a *chimbly*; and a muskmelon, a *mushmillion*. A mean man was contemptuously described by the epithet *or'n'ry*, a contraction of ordinary, but of intenser meaning than the original. The noun sassafras was corrupted into *sassyfax*; and the words asparagus, cucumber, onion, and lilac occasionally gave place to the variants *sparrowgrass* or *sparrygrass*, *cowcumber*, *ing-an*, and *laylock*.

Tip holds in memory a few words which, though not in the dictionary, were in the living language of his juvenile vocabulary. One of these was the noun *puttydoze* or *puttydose*, perhaps analagous to the Southern "bulldoze," a name applied to the children's game of pummeling one another in a pillow-fight. Another colloquial word which bad currency on the school-grounds of Ridgeville, and elsewhere, was the verb *cooster*, meaning to dawdle or potter around.

Influenced by such conditions of environment as have been described or suggested in this and previous chapters; with such close relation to nature, whether in the sunshine of open fields or under the enticing shade of the greenwood; with such opportunities of education, in school and out of school, did our Buckeye boy and thousands of other country lads in southern Ohio begin that almost unconscious training of body and mind which was afterwards to bestead them as the fundamental element in what lecturers before Teachers' Institutes call the fitting of youth for the "actual duties of life."

Chapter VI – Wagon-Road and Railway

A public road ran within a few rods of Tip's home, making two sharp curves in its course, and cutting off the Sugar-Camp from the larger area of the farm. This thoroughfare, commonly called the Big Road, was a main artery along which streamed such of the world's life as flowed through that comparatively sequestered region. The general direction of travel was from east to west, and the course chosen by many families migrating to Indiana, or, later, to Illinois or Iowa, was over the avenue just mentioned. A favorite spot whereon movers were apt to camp for the night was a broad green space at a bend of the road, in the shade of a group of maples belonging in part to the sugar-tree grove and in part to Graham's Woods. In that wayside nook, under spreading boughs, and upon a grassy carpet, seekers for new fortunes would halt and unhitch their tired horses, perhaps from a large, boat-shaped Conestoga wagon; would build a camp-fire, cook meals in kettles swung over a pile of blazing sticks, and make their beds where the stars shone in their sleeping faces. Often it happened that, in the dusk of the evening, a messenger would come from one of these camping families to the nearby farmhouse to request a supply of fresh provisions; milk or eggs or bread, - or to solicit lodging for the old and decrepit, or for sick mothers with weakly children or perchance new-born babes. Hundreds of people, old and young, journeyed along that interminable road, on what seemed to Tip's imagination a sad and solitary unknown course, past the quiet farmhouse, on away beneath the overhanging trees, "moving out West." Not a few returned, looking very melancholy and homesick, and hurrying as fast as their weary beasts could haul them and their poor belongings, back to the log-cabin from which they had gone forth, with doubtful hope, a year or two before.

In the period of which we write, most of the country roads of southern Ohio were for a considerable part of the year unspeakably "hard roads to travel." They were, with few exceptions, "dirt-roads," properly so called, worn into ruts and frequent mudholes into which wheels would sink axle-deep. One of the public ways over which Tip's father was obliged occasionally to drive to Minktown, had stretches of the veritable "corduroy" construction often described in the annals of backwoods engineering. The, yawning gaps between log and log formed dangerous traps in which the legs of horses were liable to be caught and broken. The worst half-mile of the Minktown corduroy bore the sibilant name "Moss Crossway." Once a year, according to law, the property-holders were summoned by the "Supervisor" to work out their road-tax by plowing and scooping the thoroughfares into better shape, or worse, and, perhaps, by hauling a few loads of creek gravel to dump into the worst chuck-holes. In winter the average road was at best barely tolerable, but in summer time, despite the dust, many of the carriage ways were ways of pleasantness.

Such “dirt-roads” as we have described were, in winter, the wagoner's dread; but he rejoiced that a few excellent macadamized highways had been constructed for the public benefit. The Old National Pike and its branches in Ohio, as in Pennsylvania, were specimens of solid and massive construction, which still suggest to the traveler a certain Roman durability. Portions of this famous road ran within a few miles of Rose Cottage. The pike from Cincinnati to Columbus, passing through Warren County, was and is a smooth, broad, and well-kept avenue. Charles Dickens on his first tour through the West in 1840, availed himself of this turnpike, which he regarded as a “rare blessing.” Writing in “American Notes” of his departure from the Queen City for Columbus, the novelist said: “We start at eight o'clock in the morning, in a great mail coach, whose huge cheeks are so very ruddy and plethoric that it appears to be troubled with a tendency of blood to the head. Dropsical it certainly is, for it will hold a dozen persons inside. But it is very clean and bright, and rattles through the streets of Cincinnati gayly.”

The mail-coach continued to be the main public conveyance for travelers long after its swift rival, the railroad-car, had begun its career of triumph. To the curious crowd of barefooted boys who made many flying visits from the schoolhouse in the corner of Riley's Woods to the hamlet of Ridgeville, it was always an exciting event to see the stage come, and stop, and go. Villagers watched the approaching vehicle from afar, and never failed to cheer when the expert driver of four or six fine horses drew up near the post-office long enough to throw off the mail-bag, after which he cracked his long whip, and hurried on with his equipage to the tavern, where a relay of fresh steeds, already harnessed, stood waiting to be hitched up. While Zeke Mulford, the postmaster, made slow haste to”change the mail,” a duty which he discharged with a gravity becoming his great function as an officer of the Federal Government, the gentlemen passengers usually got out of the coach to “stretch their legs,” a healthful exercise always taken inside the barroom; while the ladies would stretch their fair necks out at the side doors of the coach and give the boys a chalice to see whether their faces and bonnets were pretty or otherwise. On a memorable occasion one of these lady tourists, a beautiful madam with a foreign air and a lovely smile, handed Tip a fine rose, which surprising and gracious compliment made him too conscious of his bare feet and torn cap. He was much in love with the lady for many months, - years, in fact, - and is not sure that his passion for her is yet altogether extinguished.

Steam had scarcely reached Ohio when Tip's father surveyed his uncleared acres near the Miami, and built his first house-and-home. The locomotive engine was a newcomer and an object of wonder. The Little Miami Railroad was not completed from Cincinnati to Xenia until 1845. When it was advertised that a through passenger train would make its trial trip from the Queen City, Tip's parents, taking their children along with them, drove from the farmhouse to the station of Corwin, now East

Waynesville, to see the "Iron Horse," or, as many country people called it, the "Bullgine." There was much disparaging talk among the farmers concerning the impracticability of what was already in successful operation, and many solemn protests were made against the murderous proceedings of the "cow-catcher." - Tip was a lad of nine, and his sensations on beholding the "Bullgine" come shrieking and puffing along the flat-rail track to the station were made up of astonishment, admiration, and a touch of terror. The engine was stopped long enough to take on wood and water, and to give the gathered throng of spectators a chance to excite, if not to gratify, curiosity. After much tooting of the steam whistle and ringing of the signal bell, by the ostentatious fireman, and after many cries of "All aboard!" by the bustling conductor, one resolute countryman, with the air of a hero risking limb and life for the sake of novel and desperato adventure, boldly stepped upon the platform of the single passenger-car, and the train rolled away toward Xenia, seeming very proud of the noise and smoke it made. Tip was sorry that the passing show was so brief, and he went home practicing the difficult vocal art of imitating the *ch', ch', ch'*, of the steam escape, and the yell of the locomotive whistle.

Chapter VII - Down to Cincinnati

In the period to which these pages chiefly relate, the farmer of the neighborhood we have described seldom undertook a long journey, but when his affairs required him to make a trip to the metropolis of the Ohio Valley, the route which he took was, naturally, the turnpike, - an excellent highway leading to the Queen City from Dayton. His tourist-car was not an automobile, but a stout vehicle built by the village wagon-maker, aided by the blacksmith; his locomotive was a pair of trusty horses. Often he carried a valuable load of farm produce to be disposed of in the "Fly Market," on Pearl Street, and, on his return, brought a "back-load" of dry-goods in boles and queensware in crates, for some village merchant who depended upon this means of transportation. Going down to Cincinnati was thus a source of profit and a means of diversion. The round trip, including a stop-over of a day or so in the City, consumed the best part of a week. - Will the gracious reader, in imagination, make one of a party on an excursion to Cincinnati, which Tip enjoyed, in company with his father, about the year eighteen hundred and forty-six?

We start from the farm early in the morning, while the breath of the dewy cornfields is yet sweetly rich upon the air. Our traveling conveyance is a typical farm-wagon, stoutly made, and painted red. Tip has helped to put the six oaken bows into the staples of the deep wagon-bed, and to stretch the white canvas cover tight and smooth, tying it down with stout twine in many places, and drawing it firmly with a shirr-rope behind. To sit snugly under this curved canopy is like camping in a moving tent. The feed-box projects at the rear of the wagon, and under this swings the tar-bucket. A broad board serves as a seat, and the home-made quilts used as cushions may be utilized as bedding, for it is customary, on such outings, to bunk occasionally in the wagon.

After bidding good-by to the home folks, and promising to take good care of ourselves, we climb into our arch-roofed vehicle, and are soon upon the weltering highway described in the preceding chapter. This road intersects the Dayton and Cincinnati turnpike at Ridgeville, a small hamlet some seven miles north of Lebanon. We halt our team in front of the village tavern, that the horses may refresh themselves by dipping their noses into the brimming trough that is frequently replenished by streams from the spout of a big wooden pump to which a long iron dipper is fastened by a small chain.

Though our boy is impatient to resume the journey, every inch of which is a pleasant excitement to his eager mind, the associations of the village tavern must detain us a little longer, especially as the loquacious landlord has much to relate of the sayings and doings of noted men who have slept in his beds or taken meals at his table, or, at least, have stood treat at the bar. Henry Clay and Thomas Corwin and many another

political orator have stopped here. Many a liberty-pole has been raised in front of the old hostelry; many a squad of militia, armed with cornstalks, has filed by on muster-day. Often has the Fourth of July been celebrated in the grove across the road, with a rub-a-dub of drums, squeak of fifes, flutter of flags, and flight of spread-eagle eloquence. Resuming our journey, we drive away southward, going very slowly, for the wagon is heavily loaded. We pass through a ridiculously little town bearing the absurdly great name of "Pekin," and through another small place called Merritstown, where there is a factory for the making of earthenware, and here Tip gets out of the wagon in order that he may enter the long, low brick building and witness the skill of workmen manipulating the plastic clay upon the potter's wheel, and observe the process of glazing crocks and jars. After having spent half an hour admiring the mysteries of the potter's trade, the boy climbs again to his seat in the wagon, and we continue our leisurely course, presently passing on our left the lake-like "Reservoir" which feeds the Canal, and soon thereafter arriving at the pretty village of Lebanon, the county seat of Warren County.

Not far from Lebanon, and near the banks of Turtle Creek, we draw up in front of a wayside tavern called the Indian Queen. Its swinging signboard shows the tawny features of an aboriginal princess, her crown an immense bunch of many-colored feathers. After watering our horses at the well of the Indian Queen, we proceed to another travelers' rest, the Lowe Tavern, a little northward from the village of Palmyra or Mason. Two miles farther on, we reach still another and much more famous public house, the Bates Tavern, where we will stop for dinner. The inn is celebrated not only on account of its excellent table and clean beds, but even more because of the reputation of the host for his complete mastery of the theory and practice of profanity, No other man on the pike could rival Bates as an eloquent and artistic dispenser of wicked words. To say that he swore "a blue streak" were to speak feebly. He cursed in all colors of language. Nevertheless, his customers, though they might deplore his one shocking vice, condoned it for the reason that he was a man of unimpeached honor, a good and generous citizen, and a peerless caterer. Many a traveler on horseback or in carriage sought his establishment, which was a welcome harbor alike for man and beast. Horses fared sumptuously in the ample stables. The wagon-yard was extensive, "sweet as a nut," and well protected by a high fence and by securely locked gates. The farmer's wagon, however rich its lading, was insured against all thieves and depredators so long as it remained in the custody of Boniface Bates.

Our next stopping is at the hamlet of Pisgah, which recalls to Tip's memory the Bible narrative of Moses spying out the land of Canaan. The fifth stage of the cityward journey brings us to Sharonville, another Scriptural denomination, and the principal tavern in the village exhibits upon its high sign-board the picture of a noble steed with flying mane and flowing tail, which gives the inn its name, "The White Horse." The

town of Reading offers the passer-by bed and board, with accommodation for a caravan of vehicles, under the roofs of the Mills House. Our next stopping place announces itself to the eye by the matter-of--fact but significant name, "The Tour Mile House." Having passed this suburban hostelry, we who are young, and always on the height of Mount Pisgah, begin to thrill with lively anticipation. Only four miles, now, from the City! The steeples will soon come within sight! A feeling of awe and vague wonder stirs in the bosom. This gives place to a transitory sensation of horror, when our wagon comes opposite the marked spot where stood the gallows-tree upon which were hanged Cowan and Hoover, two notorious murderers. "A part of the scaffold may be seen yet, I am told," says our driver. "If you wish to get out and walk across the hill, you may see for yourself." Tip has no desire to look upon the place of execution; - quite the contrary. He has no eyes for anything except the promised emporium. The devouring forward look carries all his thoughts and feelings forward. At last the fair metropolis comes into full view! - With unexpected suddenness we behold it from suburban uplands! - behold its checkered streets, its black roofs, its gleaming spires, seen indistinctly through a thin cloud of smoke. The long curve of the shining river, the far hills of Kentucky, the nearer flanking valleys of Deer Creek and Mill Creek, appear in vivid, bird's-eye picture! - The Queen City, then, is at last a realized hope, an actual certitude, not merely a country lad's shadowy dream. - Slowly we descend the long incline of hill, and we are conscious of being within the corporate limits. There is one more tavern at which every farmer's wagon is expected to halt, a guesthouse belonging geographically to the town, yet preserving a bucolic character notwithstanding its unrural name, "The Saint George," - a famous inn, over the door of which a very large sign-board displays, in life size, the chivalrous Saint mounted on his mailed war-horse, slaying the dragon with a mighty spear.

We drive down Vine Street to Fourth, east on Fourth to Broadway, down the steep grade of stylish Broadway to the vicinity of the "Try Market," a long, wooden structure situated only a square or so from the renowned and fashionable "Spencer House." The wagon and horses are intrusted to safe-keeping in a livery-stable, and we, bewildered pilgrims from a far country, are now foot-loose, and free to explore the metropolis and to enjoy its novel sights.

The noise and bustle of traffic upon the wide, steep landing of Water Street, the majestic sweep of the broad Ohio flowing between its hilly shores, and especially the imposing appearance of the numerous, magnificent steamboats which line the wharf, looking like pleasure-palaces afloat, made a powerful impression on a country boy of Tip's imagination! To go on board of some gay New Orleans packet, the *Columbus*, the *Joan of Arc*, the *Chieftain*, or the *Splendid*; to view the engines in the hold, to walk through the carpeted cabin, stretching away like a fairy street from the captain's office to the ladies' parlor in the distance, to climb the narrow stairway over the wheel-house to

the hurricane deck, and on up to the giddy height of the pilot-house, with its wonderful wheel,-this was an experience which caused the heart to beat double time, and loaded the tongue with a whole volume to tell at home.

Tip's father, always deeply interested in public institutions and in architecture, guided the way through the city to the principal hotels, to the courthouse, and to the churches, not omitting the Synagogues. He took particular pleasure in pointing out "Trollope's Folly," the Mechanics' Institute, Woodward College, St. Xavier's College, and the beautiful Cathedral of St. Peter, with its Grecian columns; and, though not a Catholic, he paid his respects to Bishop Purcell.

Nor did the cosmopolitan spirit of that most liberal of parents deprive the boy of urban experiences less conventional. When nightfall shrouded the town in tempting mystery, he conducted his grateful charge, in the glare of street-lamps, to bazaars and auction rooms, to surprise the lad's childish curiosity with sights and sounds the like of which the faun never saw or beard. - But the opportunity which, in common with thousands of country boys, Tip could least think of foregoing, was that of visiting Monsieur J. Dorfeuille's Western Museum, of which he had heard many a wonderful tale. This famous museum was located somewhere on lower Main Street, in a three-story brick building. Among its countless curiosities you might see a "Beautiful Moss-Covered Fountain," a "Phaenakistoscope," the "Enormous Elk," and a "Real Mermaid." You might feast your eyes on Indian clubs and calumets; tomahawks and bows; ponderous bones of the Mammoth.; the bludgeon which killed Captain Cook; a bunch of rusty keys from Cave-in-the-Rock (a robber's den in southern Illinois); fragments of the exploded boiler of the steamer *Moselle*; and dazzling pictures of Asiatic temples and of Circassian girls, seen through magnifying lenses fixed in the wall. Exceedingly wonderful, in the boy's artless vision, were the wax figures, single and in groups, portraying notable or notorious characters. There stood Aaron Burr in the act of firing his pistol at Alexander Hamilton, and there lay George Washington on his deathbed. In the next booth reclined the Sleeping Beauty in all her loveliness, the Prince bending over her, meditating the awakening kiss. To relieve this pleasing scene, one need but look on a harrowing tableau showing Cowan in the act of murdering his wife with an ax, while his children, already slain, lie weltering on the bloody floor. From this tragedy the morbid spectator inevitably turned to enter the Chamber of Horrors, in which, amongst other ghastly and revolting objects, was exhibited the head of Hoover, the murderer, a dreadful relic preserved in an enormous jar of alcohol.

Yet even the Chamber of Horrors was outdone, in some respects, by the ingenious assemblage of diabolic scenes and figures on exhibition in the top story of the museum, where late every evening Monsieur Dorfeuille unlocked to his patrons the half-terrifying, half-grotesque, moving machinery of what was advertised as the "Infernal Regions." This original contrivance of waxwork and scenic painting was the

joint invention of the sculptor, Hiram Powers, and a French artist named Hervieu. It was a composite study suggested by Dante's Inferno and Milton's Hell. Within the murky confines of Hades were shown brimstone lakes of fire, and mountains of ice, walking skeletons, imps with flaming eyes, and black devils tormenting damned souls. Though Tip, forewarned, had fortified his will against the danger of being taken unawares by any frightful make-believe in that doleful empire, he could not escape the spasm of alarm which shook his nervous system when the waxen similitude of Sin, which sat by the Stygian gate, suddenly sprang towards him with a Miltonian horrid cry.

Another startling feature of the "Infernal Regions" was a mysterious contrivance by which a strong electric shock was conveyed to the unwary visitor who chanced to draw the current by stepping upon certain deceptive plates of iron and touching the metallic grating through which the show was seen.

The coarse extravagance of the exhibition, though revolting to taste, was redeemed by broad humor which everybody could enjoy. His Satanic Majesty was represented as a decidedly good-natured, small-horned, fork-tailed, cloven-footed old gentleman in red tights, who politely welcomed all his auditors to his fiery kingdom, saying he was glad to see so many fine people in that hot place. Old Nick's comical pranks and his jocular remarks, replete with local "gags," were invariably greeted with peals of laughter which echoed merrily through the realm of endless woe.

The Western Museum was certainly more wonderful than Tip had anticipated, and its marvels helped to sustain his illusion that the City was a strange, unreal world altogether unlike the country. His glamored imagination confused the living men and women swarming the streets, with the life-like wax figures assembled in the show-rooms of the edifice where Monsieur Dorfeuille and the fat and talkative Frenchwoman who sat at the foot of the lower stairway to take tickets, seemed as much a part of the mechanism of the place as were the gibbering fiends and the moving skeletons in the shades above, or the peculiar, big hand-organ just within the entrance, the unearthly but by no means heavenly music of which haunted and long continued to haunt his ears like a ghost of lugubrious sound.

The evening spent at Dorfeuille's, Tip regarded as the most exciting he had ever passed; but it was discounted by the next night's more passionate and more *dignified* sensation; for, on that memorable second night, the lad's father, dear comrade, took him to the old National Theater, on the east side of Sycamore Street, between Third and Fourth. As was customary, a double-bill was presented, the opening drama being John Howard Payne's tragedy entitled "Brutus: or the Fall of Tarquin." No language can convey an adequate idea of the effect of the representation of this stage-play, upon Tip. It was the first time he had been inside of a theater. He remembers not who played the part of Brutus, or that of Titus, the ill-fated son whom it was the father's

patriotic duty to condemn to death. Sire and son may have been very poor actors; but in the boy's estimation they were not actors, - they seemed real men, doing their fatal and affecting parts then and there, for the first and last and only time. The final act of the tragedy almost took away Tip's breath. He will as soon forget the sun, moon, and stars, as cease to remember the pathetic closing scene - Brutus on the tribunal, Titus brought in by the lictors, the condemnation, the embrace of father and son, the final doom from the lips of Brutus after he reascends the tribunal:

"To death! When you do reach the spot,
My hand shall wave your signal for the act,
Then let the trumpet's sound proclaim it done!"

Tip's heart stopped beating, to listen for that trumpet's signal. The awful note was sounded. Brutus, garbed in his toga, standing like a statue, speaks on:

"Justice now Demands her victim! A little moment,
And I am childless. One effort, and 'tis past!
Justice is satisfied, and Rome is free!"

The oaks in the Big Woods, if they are yet standing, may testify to the many times a declaiming voice repeated to their solemn audience, that closing line

"Justice is satisfied, and Rome is free!"

The after-piece, that evening, on the stage of the National Theater, was a farce turning upon the ludicrous experiences of a youth, who, until after he reached the age of twenty-one, lead never seen or heard of a woman. It was very amusing, and Tip laughed with the whole audience; but through its merry notes he continued to hear the Roman father's words:

"Justice is satisfied, and Rome is free!"

The sojourn in Cincinnati is over. The excursionists are on the Lebanon pike, homeward bound. Their farm produce has been sold in the "Fly-Market." A back-load of dry-goods, crockery, and hardware, consigned perhaps to Boake & Hardy or to L. M. Hadden, has been snugly packed into the wagon-bed. Now the wayside inns have lost their alluring charm to those who have been "down to Cincinnati," and must suffer the reaction of a return to tamer scenes. Exhausted by unwonted strain, the travelers talk little and meditate much. Strange, the homesick mood which suddenly

comes over the weary boy. - At last, from a rise in the road, his drowsy eyes catch a view of the sleepy hamlet of Ridgeville, - the tavern, the blacksmith shop, the tin fish swimming on the spire of the new Universalist Church. Yonder on the by-road .is Riley's Woods, looking oddly unfamiliar; and can that low building be the schoolhouse? Yes: half an hour's drive will bring the wanderers home.

With dull rumble, as if complaining of the tedious length of road they have been compelled to measure, the wheels toil on, bearing the wagon and its passengers past Riley's Woods, past the "advertising tree" at the cross-roads, past Lackey's meadow and Staley's cooper-shop, past the green and shady ground where the westward movers used to camp for the night and build their gypsy-fires, turning the corner where the road curves to skirt the well-known Sugar-Camp,-and when this bend is rounded, the horses, forgetting their fatigue, quicken their pace without admonition from whip or lashing lines, and soon reach the open gate through which they pass into the homeward-leading lane! Now comes bounding from his cozy kennel old Bull, the house-dog, and with joyful barking leaps and circles around the wagon. From the garden is wafted a faint, mingled perfume of domestic herbs and friendly flowers, and Tip, leaning forward to inhale a fuller breath of the fragrant air, utters a half-involuntary glad cry as he recognizes, where they stand in a waiting and expectant group on the vine-clad porch of Rose Cottage, his mother and sisters, waving a salute to the fortunate loved ones returned to them safely from untold adventures in the Queen City.

Chapter VIII - Being A Farmer-Boy

Nature is the sovereign schoolmistress: she teaches every science; incites to endless investigation; half discloses the mystery of Life in myriad forms of use and of beauty. She is the prompter of thought and inquiry, the mother of emotion, the nurse of imagination, the inspiration of religion and poetry. Therefore the inestimable value of the experience which may be gained from that intimate knowledge of natural objects and processes acquired by the actual observation of, and participation in, the various operations of a farmer's life. He whose tasks and whose recreations bring him into daily and hourly contact with earth and sky in their thousand aspects, must learn much of the elemental laws of being. He is very near to the secrets of God; he drinks at the fountainheads of knowledge; and, with faculties quickened to interpret every phenomenon and whispered hint of nature, he

> "Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

To him the changing year is a perpetual revelation, yet an inscrutable wonder. He follows the seasons in their annual procession, from the time of the first piping of the bluebird ere the March-rime blossoms under the drift of dead leaves in the woods, through the months of plowing and planting, through the months of harvest and fruit-gathering, to the time of the withered bough and of the stealthy snow and benumbing ice. He is brought into familiar acquaintance with cause and effect, succession of phenomena, generation, birth, growth, decay, and death; with struggle and success, surrender and failure, evolution and survival.

In this school of nature, disciplined by the lessons taught by work and play in an agricultural community, our Buckeye boy was brought up. Even as one unconsciously acquires the language and usages of the land of his nativity, so Tip, born in the country, grew into the habitudes of those around him, learning

> "To plow and to sow, to reap and to mow,
> And be a farmer-boy."

Like most country lads he inherited the obligation (more or less shirked as a matter of self-preservation) to do innumerable chores, to weed the garden, hunt the eggs, bring in firewood, carry water to the hands in the field, drop corn, gather sheaves, stow away hay in the-mow, drive the cows home from pasture, and assist in a hundred minor tasks demanded by the exacting economics of the farm. Tip can hardly recall a period of his life in which he was too young to help "gear up" horses and assist in hitching

them to the wagon, the sled, or the plow. As he grew older and stronger, of course he attempted heavier labor, often receiving aid and counsel from his brother John, who was his model and guide in all exercises requiring strength and skill. From the subserviency of a mere doer of chores, who had to run at the bidding of anybody and everybody, he gradually worked upward to the rank of a "half-hand," sharing in the set and regular tasks of adults, hoeing his one row to his brother's two or three, or, in the season of harvesting the corn, following the wagon and husking out the ears of the "down row," while on either side of the wagon a grown-up man, with nimble husking-peg and athletic wrists, stripped the rustling shucks from the golden wealth of twice as many upright stalls. Whenever, in this competitive business of husking corn, a red ear was disclosed, the fortunate finder held it aloft and shouted, "Good luck!"

To be a "half-hand" carried with it some privileges and some exemptions; but upon the whole it was harder than to be a choreboy, because it entailed regularity and a degree of responsibility, things repugnant to boyhood, which, being a natural and savage state, takes

"no hint of duty
From all the glad blue of heaven!"

Tip keenly enjoyed many kinds of work on the farm, but he liked idleness better, and never did the delight of toil, in seedtime or in harvest, prevent his hearing the welcome "Hoo-hoo !" of a home-calling voice, or the mellow toot of the dinner-horn, which summoned him from the industrious field.

When the boy had developed sufficient muscle to engage in such hard labor, he took peculiar pleasure in guiding the plow, especially in the process of "breaking up" a piece of fallow land. Emphatically this driving the "team afield," this furrowing of the "stubborn glebe," gave him a sense of mastery, a feeling of conquest and sovereignty, over the soil. The sound of the plowshare cutting through the fertile black loam and the motion of the curling furrow as it rolled evenly from the smooth moldboard; the wholesome, *primeval* smell of pregnant earth; the infinite disclosure of virtues and vitalities which had lain hidden until now upturned to the, light of the sun and the inspection of vigilant birds, these engaged his five senses and kept his mind continually on the alert. Nor was he less alive to impressions of a more sentimental character. The selfsame experiences that the poet Burns immortalized in the spontaneous lyric, "To a Mountain Daisy," were of frequent recurrence to him, if, instead of a mountain-daisy, a spring-beauty or a violet be substituted. How often when, from the destruction which the "cruel coulter" had wrought upon its "wee bit housie," a field-mouse fled away in "panic," did the boy, touched to the heart by such catastrophe, recall to mind the compassionate words of the Ayrshire poet,

“I lead be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle!”

For there, in a leather sheath on the plowbeam, was the “murd'ring pattle,” ready at hand for other than its intended use, which was only to clean the moldboard.

The season for harvesting the cereal grains, wheat, barley, oats, and rye, overwhelmed the husbandman with urgent labors, most of which were far from agreeable to the boys. - “Push your work or your work will push you !” - Slowly and toilsomely, by means of the old-fashioned cradle, swath after swath, the ripened fields were shorn, then raked into sheaves and bound. The comparatively easy task of gathering the sheaves fell to the boys, who derived from it as much amusement as was compatible with the conscious doing of work. Once upon a time, when Tip and another lad had haled together the dozen sheaves requisite for a regulation “shock,” they bethought themselves of the story of Joseph and the dream that he had dreamed: “Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.” Making application of this Scripture, the boys dramatically set one big sheaf firmly upright and ranged the other eleven in a circle around it, all bowing toward the king sheaf in the center. Then arose a friendly altercation between the boys as to which one of them should represent Joseph, and which his brethren, Tip finally persuading his playfellow to assume the collective part of the brethren.

Though the threshing-machine was coming rapidly into use among Ohio farmers, the immemorial method of separating the grain from the straw by “tramping out,” was still generally practiced. A double row of sheaves was placed upon the barn floor, in a circle resembling a small circus-ring, and then two, four, or six horses were driven round and round upon this course until their trampling hoofs had beaten the grain from the straw. After the straw had been removed, the fan-mill was employed to winnow away the chaff. This primitive mode of threshing again recalled the Old Testament: “Muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn.” Not less ancient of origin was the surviving process of “tribulation,” by which the flail, - skillfully wielded, beat the good grain from its chaffy coatings and encumbering stalks.

Bread being the staff of life, every provident farmer of the neighborhood had frequent occasion to drive to one of the grist-mills on the Miami, - usually Hinchman's Mill, near Oregonia, and not very far from Fort Ancient, - taking sacks of wheat, corn, rye, or buckwheat, to be ground, or exchanged for proportional return of flour or meal.

Relying thus upon the miller for the sweet, fresh foodstuffs which the housewives transmuted into loaves, corn-pone, Indian-pudding, and buckwheat-cakes, the farmer depended no less upon the blacksmith for the far different service of making

and mending various agricultural implements. The country smithy is an institution which appears much the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Vulcan seems a stubborn conservative. Yet some changes do occasionally invade his sooty domain. The old forge in the village where our farmer-boy heard the "heaving bellows blow," and watched the sparks fly "like chaff from a threshing floor," was a typical one. Thither the youngster was often sent from the farm to have a horse shod, a plowshare sharpened, a broken clevis or trace-chain rewelded; or to have the tire of a wagon-wheel "cut," and reset around the smoking felloe. This observation of the behavior of iron under the persuasive force of fire and hammer, went into Tip's education. So also did his inspection of the honest, old-fashioned, creative work which was carried on in the wagon-making establishment that stood just across the road, opposite the blacksmith-shop. There the wagon-maker, who was, moreover, a wheelwright, actually made wagons, not by machinery but by hand, with such simple tools as are usually contained in a carpenter's-chest.

The mechanic arts as practiced in the country sixty years ago, were, of course, not nearly so much specialized as they now are. In those comparatively primitive days one man learned to do several different kinds of technical work. Almost of necessity the average farmer strove to become, if not a. master-mechanic, at least a Jack-of-all-trades. He was, in a fashion, his own architect, stone-mason, carpenter, blacksmith, cobbler, tinker, and clock-mender. There was on the premises of Tip's grandmother a convenient structure called the Shop, in which were to be found a forge, a turning-lathe, and a carpenter's-bench supplied with a great variety of tools and appliances.

The stores which were maintained in the village for the accommodation of a rural neighborhood in ante-railroad days, were somewhat different from those now to be seen in country towns, and were of much local importance. Country folks did not think of going directly to the city to purchase goods for themselves, much less of having orders filled by express or through the mail. Retail dealers kept on land quite a large stock of those articles most needed by the average family, in the line of dry-goods, hats and caps, boots and shoes, hardware, queensware, groceries, and "notions." Commerce endeavored to bring the necessaries of life within the reach of the poorest. Sugar and tea, needles and calico, were paid for in butter at ten cents a pound, and eggs at six cents a dozen, or in other salable commodities brought directly from the farm.

Eggs and butter, feathers and wool, hides and tallow, beef and pork, - these are a few of the staple products the mere mention whereof suggests how much of pastoral prosperity is derived from domestic animals, which, having enriched their owners with a various tribute supplied from their living bodies, are finally sacrificed, on the shambles, for man's benefit. Something more than pitiable in the fate of those dumb creatures appealed to our boy, whose nerves, though not supersensitive, were at least

sufficiently alive to painful impressions. He was made grievously unhappy, for example, by what seemed to him the merciless slaughter of swine, a repulsive tribe bred and fattened only to be struck dead by an iron mallet, then carved into hams, shoulders, and side-meat, for the table. Neighbor meeting neighbor, when the season of whetted blades and of the sausage-machine came on, would ask, "When do you butcher?" or, "Wish you would come over, Thursday, and help us kill hogs." Memory revolts from recalling the sickening horror of the dreadful Day, the squealing of the doomed victims, the foul odors of blood and death, the fetid steam which rose from the black kettles in which, to loosen their bristles from the hide, the newly slain brutes were scalded, the long gibbet upon which their white carcasses, each hung by a gambrel, froze in the cold, clear moonlight. All these details were distressing to contemplate, yet their repulsiveness deterred no one from partaking of a delicate spare-rib or a morsel of well-seasoned tenderloin.

The plucking of live geese and ducks, though it appeared woefully to hurt the hissing or quacking fowl, did not seem to awaken much remorse in the gossiping dames, - it was women's work,who made a kind of frolic out of this feathery robbery. Families must have beds and pillows.

Almost every farmer pastured a flock of sheep, which supplied a quantity of wool that was usually carded in a local factory and returned in the form of spin-rolls to the housewives, who with their humming wheels twisted it into yarn, ready for the knitting-needle or the loom.

The processes of sheep-washing and sheepshearing, as Tip observed them in his childhood, differed in no wise from the modes described in Thomson's "Seasons," which pastoral record of the "rolling year" was the first book of verse that the boy chanced to read. He recollects going along with his father, his brother John, and his uncle Joe, when they "urged to the giddy brink" of Clearcreek a bleating flock, compelling "the soft fearful people" to "commit their woolly sides" to the stream; recollects how, after the "well-washed fleece had drank the flood," and the sheep were driven home, their snow-white coverings were "borrowed" by the "tender swain's well-guided shears." But he remembers, also, a far different picture, - a pathetic and harrowing sight the scene of which was a pasture field on his father's estate. Sheep-killing dogs, with a wolfish instinct for blood and havoc, had there, by night, assailed the helpless, innocent flock, chasing down, in sheer savage sport, one after another of their panic-stricken victims, not to feast upon the slaughtered prey, but only to sink sharp white teeth into bleeding throats. Here lay a sturdy ram, his twisted horns low sunk in the weedy grass; there, stained with her own blood, a hapless ewe, that seemed to have died trying to save her lamb, which lay dead and mutilated by her side. It was indeed a ghastly and mournful spectacle, never to be forgotten. Following the lead of his father's footsteps from place to place, searching the field over to count the losses

sustained by the flock, and followed timidly by the few sheep which the dogs had spared, the boy felt his heart swell with natural grief, and is it any shame to him that tears ran down his cheeks?

Chapter IX - Country Schoolmasters

When one learns how to talk, to count, to read, and to write, he possesses the fundamentals of a sound education; and these fundamentals were very well taught in the humble academy erected near Ridgeville, in a corner of Riley's Woods, in the year 1846. There was something staid, rigorous, and puritanic in the prim severity of the architecture of this building, with its right angles, its close-shuttered windows, its narrow chimney, and its low-capped double door, which looked to Tip's child-imagination like the scriptural strait gate about which he heard and read rather too much in his juvenile days. But the edifice was new and clean, and if the interior seemed comfortless and somewhat jail-like, those who suffered temporary imprisonment within its walls were consoled by the knowledge that Paradise lay just outside, and that their school-yard included, in a sense, the wildwoods, the open fields, and all the roads, lanes, and byways of the district.

The school-room was divided into two sections, by a wide aisle running from the door to the teacher's desk, the "girls' side" being on the east, and the "boys' side " opposite. In the winter season, an immense "ten-plate" stove, consuming vast quantities of firewood, occupied a space midway up this aisle. Each half of the floor surface was furnished with two rows of strong, heavy, double desks of hard poplar, painted a leaden hue. These desks had sloping lids, opening on stout hinges, and were provided with locks, the keys to which the careless schoolchildren speedily lost. The kit of educational tools with which, in the eighteen-forties, a fully equipped "scholar" in his early teens was furnished, included not only the indispensable slate, with its "green spot," and a supply of carefully chosen slate-pencils, but also a few text-books, necessarily a Speller, a Reader, and an Arithmetic.

Much attention was paid to the art of penmanship, and every pupil's desk treasured a copybook, a goose-quill pen, and a bottle of ink, which fluid was either bought from the village store or manufactured at home out of such materials as nut-galls or oak-bark ooze and copperas, mixed in a thin solution of gum. Many of the pupils were provided with a sifter of blotting-sand, and a few could boast of a pounce-box, from which was sprinkled a white powder used to prevent blotting in rewriting over erasures. Steel pens were coming into fashion, but one of these, of good quality, cost as much as twenty-five cents, and therefore the classic feather for a long time continued to be the instrument with which wavering "straight lines" and "pot-hooks" were traced, capital stems and flourishes wrought, and faultless graphic beauty achieved in such inscriptions as,

"Many men of mangy minds,
Many birds of many kinds;

Many fish swim in the sea,
Many men cannot agree."

The copy-book was made by folding together several sheets of foolscap, cutting the same into leaves of the proper shape, and stitching the latter between improvised covers of brown paper. Often it was necessary to rule the pages, the required lines being drawn with a pencil of bar-lead such as was commonly used in running bullets, and which was for sale at all country stores. Plumbago had been employed in the manufacture of tiny pencil-points, which, before using, had to be fitted to a metallic holder, but the modern "leadpencil," inclosing the graphite in a wooden casing, if invented, was not yet in general use.

The School Readers first employed in the new schoolhouse were chiefly a series prepared by Charles W. Sanders, a popular text-book maker of the period. "Sanders' Readers" gave place to a series compiled by Lyman Cobb, and these, in turn, were superseded by "McGuffey's Eclectic Series." The first text-book in Geography which Tip remembers having studied, was an interesting octavo prepared by J. Olney. This book, with its accompanying Atlas, was succeeded by a school geography designed and edited by Ormsby Al.. Mitchel, the celebrated Ohio astronomer. One enterprising Ridgeville teacher organized a class in Civil Government, using as a text-book a "Political Grammar" written by Edward D. Mansfield, of Cincinnati. In the natural progress of educational affairs new studies were introduced and new books adopted. The first treatise on English Grammar employed in the school was the quaint and intensely earnest little volume entitled "Familiar Lectures on English Grammar," by Samuel Kirkham, the text-book from which Abraham Lincoln learned "the established practice of the best speakers and writers." To this day Tip treasures his own time-worn copy of "Kirkham's Grammar," a slender octavo neatly bound in calfskin; and how distinctly the sight of it recalls the thrill of boyish enthusiasm with which he opened it for the first tine and read the introductory sentence addressed to the Young Learner: "You are about to enter upon one of the most useful and, when rightly pursued, one of the most interesting studies in the whole circle of science."

It was long before "History" and "Physiology" were considered sufficiently "useful" to form part of the common-school course, though a text-book on Physics, - Denison Olmstead's "Natural Philosophy," - held a place in the curriculum, and Algebra, a later comer, was introduced about the year 1854, by a progressive teacher named Hawthorne.

Mention has already been made of the Yankee preceptor to whom was intrusted the management of the school when it first assembled in the new brick edifice. To some of the younger pupils this wise man from the East seemed a being of supernatural quality and probably not subject to ordinary needs and perturbations. Such illusory

conceptions concerning him were surprised and partially corrected for Tip when one day at the noon recess he happened to catch a glimpse of the Master in the act of eating bread-and-butter, and, for dessert, a piece of custard pie, which delicacies had been carried to the temple of learning in an ordinary lunch-basket made of willow twigs. The discoverer of these evidences of human appetite feared the man less and loved him more on coming to realize that he, like other mortals, needed food, - that, though a schoolmaster and a Latin scholar, he was not so godlike as to slight cake and pie. However, there was something impersonal in the personality of the teacher, which prevented familiar approach, even at the privileged " intermission " hour, and which at all times held the boys and girls in tempered reverence of him. Strict, though just, he was not to be “fooled with” by the boldest athletic boy or the biggest pretty girl. Tip suddenly came to a realizing sense of the majesty of the law when he was himself overtaken in a misdemeanor with consequences very mortifying to his pride. The inexorable disciplinarian compelled him to stand for an agonizing half-hour on the top of a desk, holding out a string with a pin-hook tied to it, with which tackle he had been detected angling under the seat for Leonidas Janney's bare toes. “Why, Henry,” commented the Master, smilingly, “I thought you had caught a mackerel! Mount up here and show the scholars your hook and line!” Tip vowed in his indignant heart, while serving out his term of punishment, surrounded by grinning lads and tittering girls, that as soon as he grew to be a man he would waylay and chastise that sarcastic tyrant; but years brought the philosophic mind, and he learned to relent and to forgive.

There is a balm for every bruise, and the day came, - it was the last day of a school year, in which the boy's humiliation was partially counteracted by an unexpected elation of soul. Tip yet cherishes among keepsakes a token of the Master's favor, a pictorial reward of merit; about the size and shape of a bank-bill, printed in colors, red, blue, and green, and inscribed with the words “The bearer has by diligence and attention excelled those of his class in ------- , and merits my esteem. ------ ------, Instructor.” The decorative designs embellishing this certificate represent a bale of merchandise in the foreground, a warehouse in the background, and a ship under full sail in the distance, where blue sky and bluer ocean blend. The precious note does not specify in what branch of study or line of conduct the “bearer” excelled those of his class, but this error of omission probably does not invalidate the paper.

The excellent teacher just described was succeeded by his cousin Justin, who also came from New England, in response to some proffer or invitation from the school trustees. The name “Justin” invested him with a certain imaginary stateliness, because, it brought to mind the Emperor Justinian, of whom Tip had heard his father read from Roman history. There was nothing in the new schoolmaster's physique to suggest Roman prowess or command, although his firm courage and strong will might well have won the applause of Cato. He was a neatly attired, slender young man, with a

face almost as white as marble.

The rougher boys of the school, conspiring together just before Christmas to test the metal of the yet untried, pale, and slender Yankee, resolved to bar him out of the schoolhouse, and to hold the garrison against every assault until he should promise to treat the insurgents to cakes, candy, apples, and cider, according to immemorial custom. But imperial Justin had his own views of domination and of the relations of subject to sovereign. Finding the door and every window barricaded, he did not pause to parley, but, procuring a heavy rail from a nearby stake-and-rider fence, he mounted it upon his shoulder and, rushing amain with this battering-ram, crashed the door open, and, springing like a lithe tiger into the room, took his place and demanded order, which indeed had come before he called for it.

This unexpected display of physical force, accompanied by so prompt and stern an assertion of will-power, left no one in doubt as to who was commander-in-chief. Henceforward all the pupils admired their teacher's reserve energy, and a day soon came in which they learned to estimate his fortitude as highly. Why was the man so wan and cadaverous? The whisper went that he was the victim of a pulmonary disease. This report caused some curiosity, but awakened no special concern or sympathy, because no one realized what it meant. Tip remembers, as distinctly as though it had happened but yesterday, the dramatic and shocking scene witnessed on a bright spring forenoon by the assembled school,-a scene in which Justin was the suffering actor. T'he pale teacher had begun his routine duties that morning looking more than usually haggard. The hours crept slowly by; an unwonted quietude pervaded the school; the Master was ominously silent, while many an eye furtively followed his movements as he paced his customary rounds up and down the aisles of the room. There was something oppressive in the constraint of the hour. By and by a tall girl - her name was Angeline-rose from her place and went up to the teacher's desk, holding in her hand a goose-quill to be made into a pen. Tip afterwards associated the tall girl with Miss Squeers, who asked Nicholas Nickleby to mend a pen, and to make the nib of it as "soft as possible," intimating " that her heart was soft, and that the pen was wanted to match." The skillful Master, like Nickleby, took the quill, and with the sharp, small blade of his pearl-handled pocket-knife began to fashion the nib as desired, while he resumed his slow walk down the wide middle aisle of the room. Tip's seat was close to that aisle, and he could not avoid observing the pallid teacher, who suddenly came to a halt and stood motionless as a statue. A stream of crimson gushed from his lips and fell, reddening the floor. He tried to staunch the blood with his handkerchief. The hemorrhage did not disturb his calm self-possession, however, nor did his habitual sense of propriety forsake him. He made no appeal, by word or sign, for assistance or sympathy. When the bleeding subsided he returned to his desk, and would have finished making the pen, as if nothing extraordinary had occurred, had not some of the

older pupils had the prudence to send for a doctor, by whom the resolute teacher was induced to dismiss school for the day and seek his lodging for rest. Not long after the alarming experience just described, Justin resigned his position, having been persuaded to seek a milder climate in one of the Southern States, where his health was restored and where eventually he attained eminent success in the practice of law.

Tip's next schoolmaster was a black-eyed, blackhaired young gentleman whose tact and intelligence soon brought him into pleasant social relations with the people of best culture in the township. As a teacher he was alert, versatile, and ingenious, but some brought against him the accusation that he gave more of his attention to private studies than to the labors of the school. Perhaps be was reading medicine or law. Be that as it may, he was a competent instructor, who made his pupils learn, not so much by compelling them to memorize lessons, as by lavishing upon them the ready contents of his own resourceful mind. The maxim, "Never tell a pupil anything which he can find out for himself," was disregarded by this teacher, who told his classes a thousand things to save them the needless drudgery of painful investigation, and to incite wholesome intellectual curiosity. One of the expedients by which he troubled the stagnant waters of routine proved quite efficacious. A few minutes of each day were devoted to the simplest oral instruction in Latin and in French, not as task-work, but ostensibly for mere fun. When the combined reading-classes daily stood up to spell, forming a line stretching the whole length of the schoolroom, and each member of the class, beginning at the head, called out his number in order,-instead of saying "First," or "Second," or "Third," as was the custom, he wits drilled to say "Primus," "Secundus" "Tertius" or "Un" "Deux" "Trois," and so on. The excitement produced by this instruction in foreign languages, ancient and modern, was phenomenal, and approximated to rapture. Furthermore, the exercise was regarded as being humorous in the supreme degree, for what could be more comical and laughter-provoking than that q-u-a-t-r-a spelt "cat-r-r-r," and meant four, and that nine in English was in French neat, a word which the boys made believe was a contraction for "Enough!"

It is to the proud distinction of the rural district with which this chapter is chiefly concerned that for a season the poet Coates Kinney resided within its borders, and that during a brief period he bad charge of the Ridgeville school. This was a year or two before the appearance of the beautiful lyric, "Rain on the Roof," which gave the author his first celebrity, and more than half a century prior to the publication of "Mists of Fire," that profound and wonderful product of his matured genius. Owing to the fact that his favorite pursuits were literary, Kinney naturally encouraged his pupils to read standard books, and to acquire facility in the arts of composition and elocution. He regarded the cultural studies as of prime importance, even in the education of farmers and mechanics, and he never neglected an opportunity to stimulate, in a young mind of any promise, a liking for great thoughts conveyed by means of adequate

language, and to call attention to the qualities of substance and of style which distinguish the literary masterpiece. Under his zealous and kindly compulsion; Tip was prompted to commit to memory many passages from the writings of leading British and American authors. Among the extracts for "declamation," which the boy learned by heart, although he did not at the time fully comprehend their meaning, were several long selections from Byron's "Childe Harold," including the familiar stanzas on Waterloo, opening with the words,

"There was a sound of revelry by night;"

the passage describing the battle of Talavera?

"Hark! heard ye not those hoofs of dreadful note?"
the lines on Athens, beginning,

"Ancient of days! august Athena!"

and the noble apostrophe to Rome:

"The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago."

Following further the history of Tip's education in the country school, we may record that among his numerous teachers there was one, a portly young man of Quaker origin, who bore the Christian, or rather, the Hebrew name of Jehiel, and who wore a long linen coat, and delighted in taking his pupils out on picnic excursions. This is about all that is remembered of him or of his short administration.

It came to pass after the reign of Jehiel, that the pupils of the Ridgeville school enjoyed, for a brief tenure, the sweet unconscious influence and example of a most kind and gentle instructor who had wandered down from somewhere in the Western Reserve. He was modest almost to dryness, a fact which did not prevent his patrons and pupils front discovering his intellectual and moral merit. Tall and slender, he also, like Jehiel, wore, in the summertime, a long linen duster. Tip associates this warm-weather garment with the circumstance that its wearer came to Rose Cottage one Saturday, having the outer pockets of his coat filled with spring beauties, violets, and other wildflowers, which he had gathered in the woods and deposited where he supposed they would not be observed by any unsentimental farmer, who, on

discovering such a sign of the schoolmaster's weakness, might report him as effeminate, inefficient, and altogether unfit for the practical and exemplary duties of his office. The prejudice which many of the country people, both men and women, of strict Puritanic or plain Quaker training, manifested against flowers and other beautiful objects, whether in nature or in art, was quite implacable.

The best service which the teacher from the Western Reserve rendered to the school and neighborhood was incidental and supra-pedagogical: he kept for sale, at the lowest price, a few books of the highest cultural value. His literary store was hidden away under the sloping lid of his large official desk, and now and then a pupil was induced to make a small purchase, not for the enrichment of the seller's pocket, but to increase the wealth of the buyer's mind. Our farmer-boy begged of his mother a silver dollar which, with throbbing eagerness, he exchanged for a copy of Irving's "Sketch Book," bound in green cloth.

The several instructors mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs were amply competent to discharge all the duties required of them, but during the period of their incumbency Tip was too young, or, at least, not sufficiently developed, to appreciate them at their true value or to realize the preciousness of his opportunity. His intellectual faculties had scarcely been aroused. The man to whose skill and enthusiasm he was indebted for the conscious awakening of his mental powers came into the neighborhood when the boy was about fourteen years of age. This man was Isaac Morris, an ambitious student fresh from Farmer's College, near Cincinnati, in which seminary he had been strongly influenced by the ideals of Freeman G. Cary, founder and president of the institution, and by the personal instruction which he had received from Professor Alphonso Wood, the distinguished botanist. Morris entered upon the work of a country teacher with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind, according to the scriptural injunction, and it may truly be said of him that he loved his work and his pupils even as he loved himself. Without neglecting the required rudimentary branches, he introduced new subjects of study and infused a fresh spirit into prevailing modes of rural pedagogy. Most of the young people whom he was called upon to teach, had lived heedless of nature's charm, with eyes that did not see and ears that did not hear; - he removed the scales from their sight and opened their senses to the ingress of real knowledge, the fundamental knowledge upon which all books must depend. Especially did he make of Botany a genuine scientific pursuit, an enthusiasm, and a delight. He was the first of Tip's teachers to provoke a profitable spirit of inquiry; he showed his pupils how things happen, and asked them to discover the why and the wherefore of every explicable phenomenon.

The educational energy of Isaac Morris was not limited to the nine or ten hours daily given to his pupils in school. He led his troops to battle of evenings against competing schools in contests of spelling, a species of scholastic warfare which still

survived in southern Ohio. The boys and girls of the Ridgeville school held to an unshaken faith that their master could outspell any other living man. He was a valiant captain, and shared with his disciples many victories and a few defeats. Tip was severely wounded at a memorable battle fought against a rival school in the "Salem" district, in which conflict he went down betrayed by the treacherous word *demesne*, having transposed the absurd *s* to the wrong side of the *n*.

Chapter X – A Scion of Nobility

"There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust."

In the quiet neighborhood in which was cast the lot of the Buckeye Boy with whose years of nonage this chronicle is concerned, few unusual or exciting events transpired to vary the routine of his daily occupations. His most memorable experiences and adventures were internal, having to do with feeling and imagination rather than with the outward world of material life and action. He had reached the age at which youthful thought becomes tinged with romantic and sentimental feeling, when the monotony of school life was agreeably broken by the advent of a remarkable Master, who wrought many reforms. So original and so provocative of interest were the personality and the methods of the new teacher that he soon became the theme of general comment and approval among the pupils. There was a certain fascination in his very name, Henry Lord Sterling, which in signature he abbreviated, according to the mode, writing it H. Lord Sterling. Current gossip reported that the gentleman came from England. The credentials which he exhibited to the schooldirectors were such as left little doubt as to his high respectability. He brought to them, and to other leading citizens, letters of introduction purporting to be from several aristocratic people in the city of Philadelphia. These letters delicately revealed that their bearer was a scion of English nobility in unfortunate circumstances.

In person, H. Lord Sterling was tall, though he stooped a little in his walls, as meditative scholars are wont to do; his features were refined and rather handsome; his forehead was high, his complexion colorless, his teeth conspicuously regular and pearly. He lisped slightly, and his expression was habitually serious, even solemn. As for his dress, it was exceedingly neat and well-fitting.

Tip was among Lord Sterling's most ardent admirers. Never was teacher who seemed more intent upon improving the manners and morals of his pupils. He gave a short lecture, every morning, on the conduct of life and the formation of character. Furthermore, he took pains to cultivate the aesthetic principle, by means of music and literary art. In the second week of the school term he brought to the schoolhouse a small musical instrument which he called a harmonium, constructed with bellows, reeds, and stops, much after the fashion of the ordinary melodeon. On this ravishing instrument he would play simple airs, accompanying the notes with his voice in familiar hymns and school songs. Classes were supplied with a certain moral "Songster," containing verses written with a salutary purpose and set to easy tunes.

Among these was a very impressive goody-good preachment against nicotine

> "I'll never use tobacco, no!
> It is a nasty weed!
> I'll never put it in my mouth,
> Said little Robert Reed."

No doubt this fine sentiment was received with general moral approval, but some of the schoolboys, though they roared it out at the top of their voices, keeping emphatic time with head, heels, and hands, really felt that the poem was too juvenile, not to say infantine, for their manly ideas. They were opposed to the use of tobacco, but they despised the puerility of little Robert Reed, and they suspected the sincerity of his vociferous pledge.

Tip, who was captivated by the harmonium, made bold to ask if he might not learn to play on that wonderful instrument; to which request the owner assented, saying that the youth was welcome to take it home on Friday evenings, and to keep it over Saturday and Sunday to practice. This generous offer was eagerly accepted, and in the course of time, to the great distress of his mother and sisters, the boy was able painfully to pick out most of the notes to the sacred tune of "Martyrs," to which he sang, "Mary to the Savior's tomb," one of the favorite hymns of his pious teacher.

Lord Sterling divined the rising spirit of adolescence, and he took an early occasion to conciliate the same by remarking that it was his intention to introduce another novel feature into the school, especially for the benefit of the older boys and girls, or, as he might almost say, "young men and young women, for some of you are no longer children."

The promised new feature to be introduced into the school was in due time explained. "It is my wish," said the schoolmaster, in his quiet, persuasive way, "to have the older students prepare a weekly paper which shall be read aloud every Friday afternoon. Shall we call it the 'Ridgeville Clarion'? I will myself be a contributor. You are all invited to write pieces for the ` Clarion.' Such exercises cannot fail to have a good effect upon your minds and morals. Who knows how many great and good men and women may now be seated before me ? - I mean, how many boys and girls who will become good and great, perhaps wealthy and powerful! In the country from which I came I have seen princes and queens; in this country every man is a king and every woman a princess!"

Perhaps it was owing to the boy's confiding trust in all that was said or done, that his suave preceptor took Tip into his confidence, consulted him about ways and means of keeping up an interest in school affairs, and finally proposed to create him editor of the announced paper, intended to be the organ of the advanced classes. The

Ridgeville “Clarion” was started, - a foolscap sheet in manuscript, - and Mr. Sterling, true to his promise, contributed to the first number an original composition, a poem entitled “The Grave.” The “Clarion” did not fail to produce a sensation in the school and throughout the neighborhood. It was an organ of reform from beginning to end, a Miltonian trumpet, sounding for liberty, religion, and law.

But a wholly unforeseen disaster ruined untimely the prospects of the “Clarion,” and brought its proprietor and his associates unexpected holidays. One summer morning when the boys and girls assembled as usual in the schoolyard, no bell rang, no teacher appeared: - in vain the children knocked on the door and shook at the lock, - no one opened to them. The explanation of the master's enforced absence soon came and rapidly spread abroad. The fact was made known that, while seemingly engrossed in the cares of his responsible calling as an educator of youth, Lord Sterling, that man of Light and Leading, in his quiet, gentlemanly way had been secretly pursuing the vocation of a horse-thief. Being caught in the act of concealing a stolen colt in the woods, he was arrested and consigned to jail by the county authorities, and afterwards tried, and condemned to serve a term in the State Penitentiary.

To-day, as the gray-haired man who was in youth Lord Sterling's most devoted and admiring disciple, reflects on the fervid enthusiasms of hopeful, bygone days, - as he thinks of those heroic songs and crusades against tobacco and intemperance and slavery, - as he catches from the past the plaintive notes of the harmonium, and remembers the proud emotion with which he saw his name at the top of the editorial column of the Ridgeville “Clarion,” there mingles with his pity for the deluded school-children of whom he was one, a profounder pity and pain for their commiserable, teacher who, despite his duplicity and guilt, had the virtue to inspire in his pupils so much genuine love for the True, the Beautiful, and the Good.

Chapter XI - Out-of-Door and In-Door Amusements

Man is a creature who, though he may be compelled to work, never quite loses the instinctive, natural desire to play. Notice how the graybeard Captains of Industry seek relaxation and enjoyment in the trivial business of driving a golf-ball from hole to hole. The child, ever indulgent father to the man, can always persuade the man to put off all other duties till to-morrow in order to go to the circus to-day. Boyhood measures time by no standard of task or hope of gain, but by the chances for sport which the seasons, the days, and the hours afford. It does not look forward to seed-time or harvest-time, so much as to kite-time, stilt-time, or time for sledding and snowballing. The round year is apportioned to twelve moons of various pleasure.

To the schoolboys of Tip's district the past ages had bequeathed a score of persistent games, many of which had descended in modified form, from Old England. Every Buckeye urchin knew, as well as was known to the childhood of William Cowper, how

> "to kneel and draw
> The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw,
> To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
> Or drive it devious with a dextrous pat."

Long a denizen of the crowded city, the writer of these paragraphs, as he recalls the sports in which the boys of the Ridgeville school engaged on the playground, more than three-score years ago, cannot but wonder whether, in these later days, country lads at school play the games with which he was once familiar, and if so, whether they follow the same rules as those observed by their predecessors, employing the same jargon of contention as was heard in the old unscientific period of "More on the Saw-mill," "Shinny on Your Own Side," and "High-Antony: Over"! When they "knuckle down at taw," aiming at the big bolar in the middle of the ring, do they say "marvle" for marble, and punctuate every move and turn of the play with such exclamations as "Doubs !" "Thribs !" "Evs !" "Fen dubs!" "No bunching !" Do they play "Scatter-base," "Prisoners'-base," and "Stink-base," invariably pronouncing the word base, "baste"? Do they play "Poison," and "Wood-dog," and "Old Witch," and "Three Dukes a-Roving "? Do they put their courage and endurance to painful proof by duels with a hard ball in "Sock-about," and with a hickory switch in "Cut-jacket," submissive to the ordeal required by the Code of Dare, the implacable god of schoolboys? Do they assay the strength of the human chain of locked hands, testing to the uttermost the muscular force of each player by the strenuous lunging trials of "Bullpen"?

Among the favorite games engaged in by the larger boys, special mention may be

made of "Three Corner Cat," and of "Town Ball," the latter sport being a simple form of what has developed into the national game of baseball. Improvised playing-balls were made, not unusually, by winding strong woolen yarn tightly around a central mass of India-rubber, and covering the compact sphere with soft, tough leather cut to the proper shape by a shoemaker.

In winter-time, after a heavy snowfall, Riley's Woods became a seat of war. Breastworks of snow were piled up by contending hosts who besieged one another or engaged in open battle. From day to day the conflict was renewed; the compressed missiles were viciously hardened into globes of ice; many a brave assailant and many a stanch defender was hurt; the anger of young blood was aroused to a pitch of recklessness, and the contest which had begun as an amicable opposition of energy to energy sometimes ended in a desperate fight for victory, nor was peace speedily restored even by the intervention of the teacher, who in vain rung his hand-bell to call the battling troops from the fierce delight of war to the restraining arbitration of letters.

The war-spirit, always dominant in the average boy, was excited to the highest degree of intensity among the lads of the Ridgeville neighborhood by the breaking out of the Mexican War. So eager was the juvenile desire to answer the call to arms, that a number of the smaller patriots of the school, including Tip, organized a military company, which used to parade to the sound of a toy drum and a borrowed fife. But like the first minute-men who enlisted in the days of George Washington, many of the privates soon became insubordinate, refusing to obey the captain, and the organization fell to pieces by virtue of the Spirit of Independence! Nevertheless, there was no cessation of militarism. A picture in Olney's Geography, of a troop of mounted Tartars flinging their long lances in a battle-charge, suggested a mode of warfare which the boys promptly adopted. They imitated the Tartars, substituting for deadly spears the slender, but hard and tough, stalks of dead and dry iron-weed. Each warrior provided himself with a sheaf of these lance-like rods, which, like Roman javelins, they hurled from serried rank to rank, shouting cries of defiance. Nor did this method of barbarous melee lose popularity until after one of the bravest of the brave,-a very Arnold Winkelried of valor,-received a spearpoint fairly in his right eye, extinguishing its sight forever.

The wide extent of woodland, with its green glooms and ambushed recesses, afforded an ideal field for such truly American adventures as were mimicked in the wild sports known as "Bear," "Deer," and "Indian," games of no small value in developing athletic body and agile mind, and of some historical interest because in imagination they were reminiscent of life in the backwoods and of the exploits of the pioneers.

Such were some of the out-of-door games, pastimes, and hardy sports in which country schoolboys of southwestern Ohio were wont to engage in the days of Tip's

youth. Though not a few of these exercises were rough and boisterous, and at times even dangerous, they all served in a degree to prepare those who participated in them for the life of strenuous action and severe competition which awaited their mature years. The natural craving for amusements appealing less to physical sensation and more to the intellect, the sensibilities, and the social instinct, was at once stimulated and measurably gratified by recreations which were enjoyed within doors, and usually after dark, "by early candle-lighting."

Of frequent occurrence was the old-fashioned "Spelling Match," which brought contending schools together and afforded to youths and maidens ample opportunity, not only to familiarize themselves with the caprices of English orthography, but also, incidentally, to gain a considerable knowledge of the intricate art of spelling out their social preferences. Many a pretty romance of shy sweethearts and of bashful boy-lovers was innocently enacted on those unchaperoned evenings when the meeting of the spelling-school lent a pretext for more than usual intimacy.

With the school and the schoolhouse was associated, also, an exceedingly popular form of semi-literary entertainment, much in vogue in rural districts at the time of which we write, and distinctively called the "School Exhibition." Those who participated in the "Exhibition," following a written program, delighted an applausive audience made up of their parents and friends, by declaiming "pieces," reading "compositions," and representing characters in "dialogues" and dramatic scenes selected from books or invented by local ingenuity.

Country "Singing-Schools," conducted somewhat after the fashion of the one immortalized by Irving in the story of Ichabod Crane, were occasionally organized in the Ridgeville neighborhood, holding evening sessions in the winter season at the home of one or another of the more enthusiastic members.

Excepting in church on Sunday, choral singing was rarely heard, and there, of course, the only pieces sung were hymns. Yet the natural craving for "concord of sweet sounds" was, in a simple way, gratified by the enterprising efforts of certain enthusiastic vocalists who gave concerts, traveling from village to village. Conspicuous among these companies were "The Hutchinson Family" and a rival organization, "The Carmen Family." Solos and four-part songs, often of a sentimental character, were rendered by these rural minstrels, with no aid from any musical instrument save the tuning-fork and the pitch-pipe. But it seemed to Tip and his sister that the Hutchinson Family and the Carmen Family "discoursed most eloquent music," and the lacking instrumental accompaniment was not missed by the eager young listeners who, up to the time of Lord Sterling's harmonium, had scarcely heard any tunable reed or sounding string, except the rudely constructed "aeolian harp" which they themselves had fixed in a window-casement of the sitting-room of Rose Cottage.

The modern elocutionist, with his readings oratorical, comic, and pathetic, had

early begun to practice his fascinating art in the cities and towns of southern Ohio, and doubtless it was owing to his interpretative renderings of Shakespeare and other dramatic authors that a popular interest was created in amateur theatricals. "Thespian" societies were talked of even on the farms, and the dramatic impulse, notwithstanding the moral scruples of many good people, prevailed so far as to induce a number of stage-struck youngsters to venture on giving a crude kind of miscellaneous performance in the upper story of the wagon-maker's shop to which reference has been made. These ambitious actors erected a platform at one end of the room, improvised a drop-curtain, and, arraying themselves in costumes the like of which would have astonished Planche, gave an evening exhibition of their amateur talent before the collected beauty and culture of Ridgeville. On that memorable occasion the chief attraction was a strolling player who, according to the voice of rumor, had actually trodden the boards of a city theater. This conceited, pompous individual, with the assistance of some awkward striplings and a bevy of self-conscious, tittering "big girls," rendered a scene from Douglas Jerrold's "Blackeyed Susan," in the performance of which most of the speaking and all the artificial and absurd acting were done by the "professional Star."

The dramatic fever proved infectious, and among those who caught it was Tip's brother John, who, forming a company of his own choosing, proposed to set forth upon a school stage such situations as he thought practicable from the then very popular play, "Pizarro." The scene which he thought most suitable for presentation before a Ridgeville audience was the one in which Rolla, disguised as a monk, holds parley with a sentinel who guards the entrance to a dungeon where Rolla's friend, Alonzo, languishes. The dialogue runs as follows:

"*Rolla.* Inform me, friend, is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?
Sentinel. He is.
Rol. I must speak with him.
Sen. You must not. *(Stopping him with his spear.)*
Rol. He is my friend.
Sen. Not if he were thy brother.
Rol. What is to be his fate
Sen. He dies at sunrise.
Rol. Ha! Then I have come in time.
Sen. Just-to witness his death.
Rol. Soldier, I must speak with him.
Sen. Back, back!-It is impossible.
Rol. I do entreat thee, but for one moment.
Sen. Thou entreat'st in vain. - My orders are most strict.

Rol. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.
Sen. He brought a pass which we are all accustomed to obey.
Rol. Look on this wedge of massy gold-look on these precious gems. In thy land they will be wealth for thee and thine-beyond thy hope or wish. Take them - they are thine. Let me pass one minute with Alonzo.
Sen. Away! - would'st thou corrupt me? Me! an old Castilian ! I know my duty better."

John, having taken upon himself the character of Rolla, made frequent rehearsals of the passage quoted, reciting both his own part and that of the Sentinel, and Tip, on these occasions, was delighted to act in the three-fold capacity of audience, prompter, and assistant property-man. The aspiring performer of the role of Rolla encountered not a little difficulty in providing himself with the accessories needful for the proper historical setting of the play. Devoting scrupulous attention to absolute realism, he considered every detail appertaining to costume and properties. The Monk's disguise was along black cloak which John borrowed from his mother. The Spanish soldier was to wear a "slashed scarlet uniform," - whatever that might be. A spear was not difficult to construct, but how to provide a 'wedge of massy gold' and a hoard of "precious gems," was not so easy. Happily a rich collection of "precious gems" was discovered in the shining pebbles of the brook which ran by the very door of the manager's house. But the "wedge of massy gold" caused much anxiety and many sleepless nights. At last, while rambling the forest, John accidentally found a decaying stump which time and oxygen had transmuted into 'something rich and strange,' of a color somewhat resembling dull red gold, and from this woodland ore he carved with his pocketknife a most satisfactory "wedge," massy enough, it might seem, to corrupt the conscience even of an old Castilian.

Chapter XII - Books and Reading

It was the habit of Tip's father to read aloud to those who at a convenient hour could assemble around him in the family sitting-room. Such a leisure interval, usually, was the quiet and restful period lasting from just after the supper dishes were cleared away until bedtime, an indefinite time which the persuasion of the listeners often deferred until the scandalized clock, with stern, sharp reproval, struck

"Some wee, short hour ayont the twal."

In winter, when fields were deeply buried in drifting snow, and no out-of-doors work was done except to feed the stock, milk the cows, and bring in firewood, the family would gather around the blazing hearth to hear the contents of some new or old favorite book. Never to be forgotten by Tip is the December day when first the story of "Oliver Twist" came into the house, - a volume bound in blue pasteboards, like a larger "spelling-book." The father opened the novel and sat down with the leisurely look of one beginning a holiday; the mother composed herself for knitting a long stocking; the girls put aside the slates on which they had been penciling pictures; the boys abruptly ceased from their game of Fox and Geese. Oliver's adventures began and proceeded uninterruptedly, and with ever increasing interest, until a climax was reached in the absorbing passage which describes the old gentleman, -"old cove," the Artful Dodger calls him, - standing at the book-stall, with a book that he was "reading straight through, turning over the leaf when he got to the bottom of a page, beginning at the top line on the next one, and going regularly on, with the greatest interest and eagerness," exactly in the way that Tip's father was reading! - The tale proceeds to narrate how the Artful Dodger picked the old gentleman's pocket, to Oliver's "horror and alarm," and how everybody ran "pell-mell, helter-skelter," crying out "Stop thief! Stop thief!" - "One wretched, breathless child, panting with exhaustion, - terror in his looks; agony in his eye; large drops of perspiration streaming down his face, - strains every nerve to make head upon his pursuers; and as they follow his track, and gain upon him every instant, they hail his decreasing strength with still louder shouts, and whoop and scream with joy, 'Stop thief !' Ay, stop him for God's sake, were it only in mercy!"

The reading had reached this melodramatic point when a halt was called; some domestic urgency required an errand to be done without delay, and Tip was immediately despatched to the house of his grandmother, half a mile distant. "Don't read any more till I get back!" he begged, and sped away, breaking a path through the snow, across the fields and through a strip of woods. Never was errand accomplished with more alacrity. The lad's thoughts of the story added speed to his flight. "Stop thief!

Stop thief!" he cried aloud, fairly flying over the snowy landscape; he imagined himself to be Oliver Twist followed by the yelling London mob, the tradesman, the carman, the butcher, the baker, the milkman, the errand-boy, and all the rest, as Dickens names them.

When the desire to enter the magic door is strong, the *Open Sesame* is always found. There is no difficulty in teaching children to read, if first a curiosity to learn what lies locked up in the mystery of print be induced in their minds. Birds need not be taught avidity, nor squirrels to gnaw a hard nut to get at a sweet kernel. Through books of nursery rhyme and pictorial fairy-tale, the boys and girls of the cottage had guessed and spelt their way from babyhood to the school-readers, - at first skipping hard words and depending upon pictures to catch the import of the text. Even the youngest in the family, Tip's sister Hannah, who, at the time of the Oliver Twist reading, was not yet "out three years old," possessed a tattered library including such classics as "Mother Goose," "Timothy Dump," and "Dame Wiggins of Lee." Little Cynthia had grown to the dignity and scholarship of seven or eight, and was able to read, with some disdain for its wispy-washiness, Mrs. Sigourney's "Pictorial Reader," consisting of "Original Articles for the Instruction of Young Children."

A fair sample of the "original articles" in this typical "good book" of the period was one called "The Log House," which was read with appreciation because of its fidelity to known fact:

"You see a house built of logs. Large trees are growing near it, and a small brook runs by. It stands alone. Few people pass that way. It is in one of the new states, where there are but few inhabitants. It has only one room. The floor, of rough boards, has no carpet. There are a few chairs, and a chest and a pine table. In one corner is a plain bedstead and a bed. From underneath it, a small one, like a box on wheels, is drawn out, where the children sleep.

"A little boy and a girl are playing near the large fireplace. It is filled with wood, and casts a bright blaze around . . . . The parents, seated by their single candle, talk lovingly of their comforts, and of the friends who are far away. They have removed to this new country, from the states which had been longer settled . . . .They have brought from their home in New England, a few books which they highly prize. These the father reads to his wife at evening, while she knits or spins at his side."

To this day our Boy jealously treasures the copy of Sigourney's "Pictorial Reader," every page of which was scanned over and over again by the gentle eyes of his much beloved sister, more than three-score years ago; her whose delicate fingers held the light brush with which she tinted the rude wood-cuts in water-colors rubbed from the precious cakes in the cheap paint-box with its sliding lid; her whose name, painstakingly traced with the unsteady pen of a child proud of a new accomplishment, recalls, as he gazes upon it, those happy days in which she was his dearest comrade,

and renews in his heart a sense of the infinite loss and inconsolable grief he suffered when she died.

According to his best recollection the first book which Tip of his own free will actually read through, without suggestion or assistance from teachers or prompting at home, happened to be, for the choice fell by the merest chance, - a volume belonging to his brother John, which bore the comprehensive title: "A Journal, Comprising an Account of the Loss of the Brig Commerce, upon the Western Coast of Africa, August 28th, 1815; also of the Slavery and Sufferings of the Author and the Rest of the Crew, upon the Desert of Zahara, in the years 1815, 1816, 1817; with an Account of the Manners, Customs, and Habits of the Wandering Arabs. By Archibald Robbins." The perusal of "Robbins' Journal" gave the boy facility in gathering the sense of the printed page, added greatly to his vocabulary, and by a very natural association led him to other books of travel and adventure, chief among which were the "History of the Expedition under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark"; the "Travels of Bruce"; the "Travels of Mungo Park"; and the "Life and Voyages of Captain Cook."

If any rule existed in the house, governing the selection of books, it was, in effect, similar to that suggested by Ruskin: "Turn your girl loose into the library, every wet day, and let her choose." It would be ridiculous to call the scanty collection, or *scatterment*, of books, in Rose Cottage, a library; but, such as it was, any volume considered by the father fit to come into the house was suitable reading for whoever had a craving for it.

Yet, while no particular dish was withheld from or forced upon the mental diet, some books of a prudential, moral, or religious quality were, if not prescribed, at least recommended, especially by the mother. One of these was, at first, rather shunned by the suspicious youngsters because of the title, "The Immortal Mentor; or, Man's Unerring Guide to a Healthy, Wealthy & Happy Life." This work, - which appears to have been gotten up by Rev. Mason L. Weems, author of the celebrated "Life of Washington," in which the story of the hatchet and the cherry-tree was first related, - contains a "Recommendation" by the illustrious First President of the United States, in the following words:

"Mount Vernon, July 34, 1799.

REV. SIR,

For your kind compliment,'*The Immortal Mentor*,' I beg you to accept my best thanks. I have perused it with singular satisfaction, and hesitate not to say, that it is, in my opinion at least, an invaluable compilation. I cannot but hope that a book whose contents do such credit to its title, will meet a generous patronage.

Should that patronage equal my wishes you will have no reason to regret

that you ever printed the Immortal Mentor.

With respect, I am, Rev. Sir, Your most obedient humble servant,
GEORGE WASHINGTON.
The Rev. Mr. Weems."

Considering this indorsement, from the Father of our Country, the young people of the farm felt it a kind of patriotic duty to "peruse" the "immortal Mentor," seeing that it was only a small book, and we venture to believe they agreed with the man who could not tell a lie, that they "perused it with *singular* satisfaction."

Another book, of lighter purpose, once in popular vogue, was often quoted by Tip's mother, who relished its pungent satire and humorous anecdotes. This now forgotten bit of English fiction is entitled, "Thinks-I-to-Myself : A Serio-Ludrico, Tragico-Comico Tale." No impression of this book remained long in Tip's memory, except that produced by the description of a precocious boy, whose proud mother, Mrs. Fidget, made herself ridiculous by compelling him to "spout" passages of poetry which he learned by rote, not leaving an inkling of their sense. He recited from "King Lear,"

"Blow, winds, and cwack your cheeks! wage! blow!
You catawacts and huwy canoes, spout
Till you have dwench'd our steeples, dwown'd the cocks!"

and from "The Bard,"

"Wuin seize the wuthless king!"

and from Pope's " Universal Prayer,"

"Father of all! in every age,
In every clime ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jovajovalord!"

Among the old text-books brought by the paternal head of the family across the mountains from his former home in New Jersey, we may name, "Butler's Elements of Geography and History," New York, 1807, and "A Treatise on Surveying and Trigonometry," of date 1814, by the Quaker mathematician, John Gummere, of the West-town Boarding School, West-town, Pennsylvania. Another book carefully fetched from the East to the West, and much valued by its possessor as an abolitionist

argument, was Thomas Clarkson's once celebrated "Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species," translated by its Quaker author from "A Latin Dissertation which was honored with the first prize in the University of Cambridge, for the year 1785." This book, which did much good service for the anti-slavery cause in America, was republished, strange to say, in Georgetown, Kentucky, in 1816, by the Rev. David Barrow. From its pages the boy obtained his first accurate knowledge of the history of human bondage, and imbibed a lasting abhorrence of all forms of slavery.

Besides the books mentioned, several others which were read aloud in Tip's hearing, or dipped into, more or less deeply, by himself, in chosen hours of solitary study, had an appreciable influence in shaping his notions of things in general. There were two sets of volumes with the contents of which, as he grew older and more ambitious of learning, he became tolerably familiar: "Plutarch's Lives," the Langhorne translation, four volumes, 1830; and that rather tedious old-time standard, Rollin's "Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Grecians and Macedonians," in eight volumes, 1829. What library in the early part of the nineteenth century, could lay claim to any degree of respectability, if it did not include Rollin, Plutarch, Josephus, and the works of Doctor Dick?

It goes without saying that "Robinson Crusoe," "The Pilgrim's Progress," "The Arabian Nights," and "Gulliver's Travels," found a welcome in the cottage, and that their convincing characters, mingling together in a common intercourse of enchantment, were hospitably entertained in the reception-hall of imagination. And all the people of poesy, breaking the charm that held them bound in the covers of books, escaped to the woods and the fields about the secluded homestead, hence forth to become visible to the conjuring eye of fancy, to which the unseen, like Heaven, is no less real than the seen, and which catches the secret of romance and song,

"Where more is meant than meets the ear."

How distinctly pictured in Tip's memory is that dusky garret in the old farmhouse, - the undisturbed retreat to which he so often stole away, as if to a clandestine meeting or a silent conspiracy with the genii hidden in books. The place was friendly to solitude and silence, isolated, remote, aloft. The bare oaken rafters sloped down almost to the floor. A tall man could not stand upright even in the middle of the room, so low was the roof. Mud-wasps had plastered their yellow nests of clay to the upper edge of the window-frame. In one corner of this attic stood a large pine box crammed full of miscellaneous newspapers, crumpled magazines, and sundry other literary odds and ends that on account of their irremediable shabbiness had been expelled from tile polite society of more "genteel" books in the more conventional room downstairs. In this chest the boy found, in varying states of mutilation and decay,

Addison's "Spectator," Franklin's "Autobiography," Pollok's "Course of Time," Young's "Night Thoughts," Baxter's "Saints' Rest," "Guy Fawkes," "Rinaldo Rinaldim," and a fragment of a volume on Roman History. These, on a memorable rainy April day, did Tip pull out, one by one, from their hiding among newspapers, like articles in a grab-bag at a ladies' fair. .None of them took his fancy, however, and he drew again and again, until, at last, he chanced to grasp two capital prizes, an odd volume of a three-volume set of Cowper's Works, and a time-stained copy of Thomson's "Seasons," minus one cover. In the poetry of Cowper, though that author subsequently became a favorite, Tip found nothing which at the time much interested him, excepting perhaps the humorous ballad, "John Gilpin," and the amiable satire, "Tithing Time": but the melodious realism of "The Seasons," exactly hitting his mood, absorbed and delighted him. He sat in the diffused light of the window and forgot everything else in the enjoyment of the florid poesy of "Spring." With ever-increasing avidity he devoured page after page, bolting at one ambrosial feast, "Spring," "Summer," and a moiety of "Autumn." Thus on an April day, he may be said to have first made discovery of the sweet taste of poetry, in the perusal of James Thomson's delicious pastoral. Not with an awakened critical sense, guided by academic rules, did he read, for he was "too simple to admire," and cared, perhaps, more for the subject-matter than for the artistic form of the verse. There was charm in the flowing numbers, and in the sumptuous imagery. The omnivorous gusto of youth cannot be surfeited on rosy-golden words. On the contrary, the more gorgeous the rhetoric the better does boyhood esteem it. On some pages of "The Seasons," almost every distich presents a florid felicity. With keen relish the young reader received the poetic flavor, as if it were a physical sensation, of such expressions as "ethereal mildness," "lenient air," "vivid verdure," "white empurpled shower," "uncurling floods," "breezy-ruffled lake," and "purple-streaming amethyst." Not less pleasing in their kind were the happy phrases descriptive of sterner aspects of the changing year, as "deep-fermenting tempests," "vapory turbulence," "loose-revolving fields," "cerulean ice," "dumb cascade," and "all-subduing frost."

How different from the calm delight and mild exhilaration produced by reading Thomson, were the emotions excited in the unsophisticated mind of the boy, when, on another rainy day and in another low-roofed attic, chance led him, for the first time in his life, to peruse a play of Shakespeare. This event transpired in one of the upstair chambers of the old pioneer log-house described in our second chapter, a bedroom which, with all its bachelor belongings, was appropriated to the accommodation of "Uncle Bill," who had there collected a small colony of authors that he liked, among whom were Byron, "Ossian," and Shakespeare. Such scant knowledge as Tip had acquired of the great Elizabethan dramatist was derived from the extracts given in McGuffey's "Rhetorical Guide" and similar school-readers. Perhaps some vestige of

Puritanic or of Quaker prejudice, lingering in the moral heredity derived from his parents, had tinctured his conscience with the notion that "Shakespeare" was not quite a proper book for young folks to read, having so much to do with love and other dangerous passions, and being written by an actor of doubtful ethics. But piquing and challenging the courage which would steal forbidden fruit, there lay the "Complete Works of Shakespeare," on Uncle Bill's bureau. Opening the big volume, at random, the boy saw that he had turned to "The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice," and his attention being caught by the opening words, "Tush, never tell me!" - he perused scene after scene, act after act, with ever-increasing interest, to the last syllable of Ludovico's closing speech,

"O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!"

when, quite overwhelmed by the cumulative effect of the passion and pathos of the tragedy, he let the book fall to the floor, and, unable to restrain his agitated emotions, gave way to the relief of subs and tears. That experience amounted to more than many months, or even years, of ordinary school-study of literature. It was an awakening of soul, a personal renaissance. Besides its effect in arousing a profound consciousness of the power that resides in great works of poetical genius,especially in Shakespeare,-this particular reading had a special, intense, ineffable result: it fixed in the imagination and in the lasting affection of the reader the two characters, Othello and Desdemona.

Chapter XIII - Religious Experience

"But how is it
That this dives in thy mind? What see'st thou else
In the dark backward and abysm of time?
If thou remember'st aught ere thou cam'st here,
How thou cam'st here thou mayst."

Employing Prospero's words to Miranda metaphorically, and applying them to past journeyings of the spirit, well may one human soul ask of another: "How cam'st thou here?" Over what psychic path, through what wilderness, aided or perplexed by what wayside inscriptions and shrines, guided or misguided by whom, didst thou come to thy present goal, - thy present condition of thought, feeling, and belief, in regard to matters of Religion? This is certainly not an easy question for any person to answer with sincerity and precision, because, however conscientiously he may endeavor to fathom the "dark backward and abysm of time," he finds it hard to remember accurately his own mental and moral history and progressive development. Especially is it difficult for introspective memory to recall the beginnings of perception and of consciousness, the first emotions and earliest prepossessions of childhood.

Whatever other influences tend to make a man what he is, there can be no doubt that much is determined by the two great factors, heredity and environment. The father of the boy whose religious struggle it is the purpose of this chapter to trace, was a man of English descent, remotely Norman, his ancestors having been originally of the Church of England, though his immediate forebears are believed to have espoused Presbyterianism on or before the date of their coming to America, which was in or about the year 1680. Tip's grandfather, settling in New Jersey, affiliated with the Quakers, and eventually himself became a Quaker, making a denominational transition such as was not unusual in his time and in much earlier days. We read in Foote's "Sketches of Presbyterianism in Virginia," that "the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians . . . who first came to America generally sought a home with the Quakers." Both sects were more or less persecuted in New England, by the Puritans, and in the South, by the Established Church. The mother of our boy was of Scotch-Dutch extraction, inheriting also strains of English and of German blood. She had been reared in accordance with, the strictest usages of the Scotch-Presbyterian regime: had been taught to put aside all frivolity at the moment the sun vanished below the horizon on Saturday evening, and not to think of any worldly thing until the same stern luminary had set at close of the long Sabbath day. But her sire, who, it appears, was an obstinate man, temperamentally of the "tough-minded" order of humanity, and a great reader, especially of the Scriptures, for some reason gradually relinquished the Calvinistic

creed, influenced by Arminian and other heterodox persuasion; and his daughter naturally enough adopted views similar to his own. Indeed, while in habits of conduct a Presbyterian, she became, in her speculative notions, what is called a Liberal, but never a Freethinker. After her marriage both she and her husband found themselves without formal church connections, he having forfeited his birthright in the Friends' Society by wedding a non-Quaker. Though without church connection, it is not to be inferred that they were indifferent to creeds or destitute of religious convictions; on the contrary, their minds were engrossed with theology and religion, not only on their own account, but for the sake of their children, two sons and three daughters. The mother felt that it was a reproach to her that she did not "belong" to some accredited religious society. The recorder of these notes remembers hearing her tell of the mortification she once suffered on being personally referred to, in a public meeting, by the audacious evangelist Lorenzo Dow, who exhorted her to make profession of faith in the Lord.

When the family took possession of the farm, the "Hurtin Proud Place," there were two centers of public worship in or near Ridgeville, a small Methodist meeting-house in the village, and a little frame building belonging to the "Old School Baptists," familiarly known as "Hard Shell Baptists," located on a lonesome hill-slope adjoining the Burying Ground, beside the turnpike, perhaps a mile out of "town." No Catholics, resided in the neighborhood: the Church of Rome was held in distrust, religious and political; the Pope was abhorred, on general principles, and the very word Jesuit was anathema. Against the Jewish race and sect there existed a vulgar prejudice founded on theological intolerance. But the only Israelites who wandered into that isolated, rural region were a few meek and innocent petty merchants from Cincinnati, with packs on their pathetic shoulders, reminding Tip of Christian with his bundle of sins,-and it was inconceivable that such as these could have bad anything to do with the crucifixion of Jesus. These peddlers always found a meal and a bed at the house of the farmer, who, somewhat to his annoyance, was now and again accused of giving countenance and harbor to "publicans and sinners," for, indeed, he confessed that he could never quite separate his sympathies from his antipathies, but was always finding good in bad, and, alas, a trace of bad in the choicest good, under whatever label it came to him. Like Goldsmith's village preacher, he was careless to scan the faults or the merits of those who sought shelter under his roof or bread at his table, and always

"His pity gave ere charity began."

In this chronicle of his flight from the City of Destruction toward the Celestial Vision, the boy whose spiritual adventures are here related felt constrained, in fear and trembling, to work out his religious destiny as best he could, in a somewhat blind and solitary manner. He was the second son of the parents just described, deriving a

heredity directly from them and remotely from their ancestors back to Adam and Eve. He was brought up in conformity with Presbyterian traditions modified by the plain and direct simplicity of the teachings of William Penn. He was taught to say his prayers, to read the Bible, and to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy in a certain perfunctory manner. There was no Sunday School for him to enter, but he was permitted and encouraged, though not urged, to attend whatever religious service was accessible to him. Any form of worship was regarded as better than none.

It may well be doubted whether so much religious liberty was a blessing or a bane, in his case, considering that he was keenly alive to exciting influences, and that to his susceptible mind an admonition to spiritual duty, a half-comprehended sermon, or even a threatening phrase of Scripture, often brought painful disturbances; for the lad had entered into a morbid state of precocious and preternatural sensitiveness. His heart was troubled. He was beset by doubts and fears. He was, as he conceived, unquestionably a sinner,the chief of sinners; - he had every symptom of total depravity. He was one of those whom he had heard described from the pulpit, as being "hair-hung and breeze-shaken" over the mouth of the bottomless pit. The worst of his misery was that he could do nothing to avert his doom, however correct and virtuous his outward behavior, for, as his Baptist aunt told him, by grace and not by good thoughts or good deeds he must be saved, if saved. Yes, he was lost. John Bunyan, in his darkest hour, never waded in such blackness as surrounded this lonesome farm-boy's spirit. The fear of Bell gat hold on him, the wrath of God pursued him. Even now, after a lapse of more than sixty years, he recalls, with a kind of pitying sadness, the remembrance of those unhappy days. And, while confessing, with Thomas Hood:

> "'tis little joy
> To know I'm farther off from heaven
> Than when I was a boy,"

he is thankful that time brings compensation for his loss, for though he must lament being farther off from Heaven than he was at ten or twelve, be is comforted with the conviction that he is not so frightfully near Perdition as he used to fear. If Heaven has risen beyond him, the other Place has sunk away. Modern preachers do not "take off the lid" so often as was once the custom. Lurid descriptions of the Last Judgment and of the Burning Lake seem to be entirely out of fashion in the polite pulpit. Truth to tell, he took so literally the words of the revivalist, that it seemed to him that Inferno must be, as Dante thought, somewhere underground, and he figured the crust of the earth to be thinnest just under the old church where Enos Lackey with. stentorian lungs was praying. At last, in the extremity of his mental distress, the child appealed to his father for light and guidance. He took a favorable opportunity to open the subject which was

troubling him, one spring morning, in a "clearing" on the edge of the farm, near a pile of logs which had been dragged and rolled together, and were slowly burning. It chanced that a sluggish "pinch-bug," crawling over the bark of one of the logs, lost his balance and tumbled into the hot coals below.

"Do animals have souls, father?"

"Well, my son, that's a hard question; they may have souls; most people think only human beings have souls."

"That's better for the animals," said the boy, "for when they burn, the pain is soon over, but our souls burn forever."

"Who Las been telling you such things as that?"

"Everybody, almost, excepting you and mother. Brother John believes it. So does the teacher, and all the ministers, of course. Don't we believe the Bible, father?"

"Yes; we believe the Bible," answered the father, looking curiously on his inquisitor. "I believe it. The Bible is the Book of Books, the Word of God. You will understand it better when you are older."

"Do you understand it?" asked the boy, earnestly. "What does it mean when it says: 'The wicked shall be cast into hell'?"

"You are not so very wicked, are you?" replied the father, evasively. The response came instantly

"The Bible says there is none good, no not one. We must repent."

The father began to perceive that his son was in real need of spiritual help, and now looked at the boy with seriousness. He was driven to a sort of pragmatic refuge.

"Do you believe in me?" he said. "Do you believe in your mother? Then, listen. The good Book, which is God's Word, says that God is Love. He is our Father in Heaven. It says that even as a father pities his children so God cares for His creatures. Do you think that your mother or I would burn you forever? Or would do you any harm whatever?"

Again the boy had a text to quote. His memory was stuffed with texts.

"'His ways are not our ways.' He might not think much about us. There was that pinch-bug; we didn't care muck when it fell into the fire. Maybe you are wrong and the others are right. There are so many of them, and they are smart men. They are sure we are wrong. I wish I could find somebody that knows the truth, and can explain the Bible and God - the Devil - and all the mysteries."

Mistrusting the infallibility of his father and groping for some Kindly Light which might lead him out of the labyrinth of doubt and fear in which he was wandering, the morbid seeker for clews came accidentally upon a book, the very title of which seemed a personal appeal or rebuke to him. The volume was Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," and contained chapters "Showing positively what Conversion is," "Showing the miseries of the Unconverted," and giving specific and minute

"Directions for Conversion." One day, while he sat meditating on sentence after sentence in this book, his mother, observing his absorbed silence, asked:

"What have you there that interests you so? Won't you read aloud to me while I am sewing?"

After a little hesitation, he began slowly to translate into audible words what he had been conning to himself "Believe this or believe nothing. Believe and obey this, or you are undone: now as ever you believe the Word of God, and as ever you care for this salvation of your souls, let me beg of you this reasonable request: that you would without any more delay remember what you have heard, and enter into an earnest search of your hearts, and say unto yourselves, - ' Is it so indeed? Must I turn or die? Must I be converted or condemned? Is it time for me then to look about me, before it be too late? O, why did I not look after this till now?"

He choked in his reading, his eyes were full of tears: "Mother!" he exclaimed, "why do we not join the church? Why are we not converted? O, I wish I could be religious and come to Christ!"

She drew him to her; he fell upon his knees, and sank his face in her lap.

"My child! What do you mean by religious I think your father is, in practice, the most religious man I ever saw. He comes as near obeying the moral law, as near following the letter and the spirit of the Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, as is possible to man."

"Yes, yes, I know he does, and so do you, but that is not religion. We must Believe."

"Believe?" repeated his mother. "We do believe whatever we think is true. No one can believe a thing without evidence of its truth. You cannot believe just by wishing to believe, or disbelieve just by wishing to disbelieve. Belief is a result of knowledge or evidence."

"No, no, mother; I mean as this book means. It says, 'Believe this or believe nothing.' You and father are good, but you are Universalists, and some of our neighbors think we are unbelievers. We must change our hearts, we must be born again."

The composure of the boy's mother, and her "sweet reasonableness," gave him solace similar to that he had received from the confident words of his father, yet he was far from convinced or cured of his soul sickness. Several months after this conversation he availed himself of a means of grace, which, as he devoutly prayed, might enable him to exchange the heavy weight of his natural guilt for the easy burden of the cross. A revival was in progress in the village. He attended a series of evening services, as did a multitude of others, young and old. The church was crowded, from "early candle-lighting' until late at night. Five or six different preachers participated in conducting the exercises of the week. A short sermon was delivered each evening, followed by

exhortations, prayers, and congregational singing, of the most earnest, energetic, and importunate character. Many of the discourses were eloquently persuasive and powerful. The boy heard them in a mood altogether reverent, being willing and anxious to be enlightened, converted, and reconciled to the will of Heaven. He sought salvation, he yearned to find the way, the truth, and the light. With passionate eagerness be listened to every word spoken from the altar. But it was not in his nature wholly to surrender reason to emotion, and he entertained a deep fear of some form of self-deception. The arguments and appeals from the pulpit added to his confusion of mind. "How can God be at once Wrath and Love? How One and Three? How Omnipotent and yet foiled by Satan? If our Maker desires to bless us and yet cannot, what becomes of Divine Power? Why does the Ruler of the Universe need a perplexing 'plan of salvation'? How may the shedding of another's blood do away with my guilt - atonement by proxy? Why did God visit Adam's fault upon mankind in general? What is the unpardonable sin?" These and a hundred other questions baffled him.

But the emotional and sympathetic manifestations of the worship affected him profoundly; the prayers touched his heart; the singing of certain hymns carried him to Heaven's gate. Other features of the service acted upon his nerves so unpleasantly that he felt an impulse to fly away and listen for the "still small voice," in some secret and silent spot. The clamorous "Amens!" the vociferous "Thank Gods!" the stormy shouts of exultance, and the jargoning "Alleluias!" stunned him with their dissonance, and seemed to bring pandemonium into the Temple of God. At times, a person "under conviction," as it was termed, generally a woman, fell upon the floor of the church, laughing, crying, and shouting hysterically. A number of her friends, male and female, formed a ring around her, prayed, sang, and clapped their hands, crying, "Glory! Gloryl" "Thank the Lord!" "Praise Jesus!" and, in their excitement of gladness, embracing one another. At length the convert was raised up and supported to a seat, when her sisters in the faith, crowding around her, repeated the joyful tidings: "She has come through! Bless God! She has come through!"

It was usual, in the intervals between prayers, for ministers to walk up and down the aisles, hymn-book in band, searching with kindled eye the faces of those seated on either side, and imploring any who had not experienced a change of heart to come forward to the mourners' bench. "Flee to the Ark of Safety!" "Do not quench the Spirit!" "Now is the accepted time, to-day is the day of Salvation!" Reiterated appeals like these, from the lips of men called to preach the Gospel and to mediate between Earth and Heaven, the young enthusiast could not long resist. He hoped the secret truths of that Other World must be open knowledge to God's immediate servants. Probably his anxious features interpreted his state of mind to the quick sight of a zealous young preacher who, passing to the corner in which he sat, asked in a kind voice, if he loved the Saviour Abashed and confused, though grateful for the interest

manifested toward him, the lad stammered in answer: “I don't know; I hope I love Him ! Do you mean God?”

“God, the Son, the Savior of the World, - do you not wish to come to Him? He is ready to receive you. Come, my dear young brother, let me lead you to the mercy seat. Come, cast your lot with those who seek the better part. Do not Hesitate, do not be ashamed of the blessed Lord who died for you upon the Cross.”

So speaking, the preacher took the boy by the arm with gentle insistence.

“I am not ashamed, but I am afraid I cannot believe.”

“Do not trouble your soul, my boy, by such a scruple. All will be made clear. Throw yourself on the infinite mercy of Jesus.”

“But, Sir, I do not understand yet. It is not right, is it, to join the church and not really believe? Will you not sometime explain the Bible to me? O, I wish you would!”

“Explain the Bible?”

“Yes; I can't understand it; I don't see the reason why -”

“The reason why?' The preacher's manner slightly changed. He seemed offended. “You must not expect to solve divine mysteries. The power of the spirit works only with the permission of our own wills. No power in the universe can coerce us. We can stride down the eternal ages defying God at every step, and He cannot help us. This spiritual consciousness is to the soul what bread is to the body, and the only way to attain it is to surrender the will to its inflowings!” Then, looking disapprovingly in the boy's face, he added: “You had best leave off Tom Paine and 'The Age of Reason'; the sooner the better.”

A flush of numb heat spread over the boy's body as he faltered: “What is Tom Paine?”

The evangelist turned and slowly moved down the aisle to the “Amen Corner”; and Tip, wounded and oppressed by a sense of humiliation and of ostracism, bowed his head upon his breast. Everything swam before his eyes in unsteady vision and all sounds seemed far and strange. The dizziness passed, and he became aware that the whole congregation was breathlessly watching a little girl who timidly glided down the aisle, and knelt at the mourners' bench. Then soft and plaintive, like music born of adoration, rose, and swelled until they filled the chapel, the words of a hymn sung in sweet chorus led by the voices of women:

“Oh, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!
The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,

Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee."

The boy's heart was touched by the sweet mysticism of the hour; by the vision of the innocent little girl's consecration to a holy emotion; by the sacred imagery of the hymn and its spirit of renunciation and absolute self-surrender once for all to everlasting peace; his heart was touched and melted, yet, deep within the core of his consciousness he heard a voice which warned him against sinking untimely into Nirvana, which told him religion must be struggle, not surrender, battle not repose; that he must think or die.

Protestantism, in its very nature and definition, suggests diversity. Even the Catholic Church becomes two, Roman and Greek, but Protestantism subdivides and separates into sects, becoming, as Beecher said, like the split end of a broom. The natural law of attraction and repulsion acts and reacts, to multiply denominations. It is not surprising, therefore, that, in a community such as that described, where the two organized church societies put so much stress upon the fear of God and His wrath as a negative incentive to "getting religion," there should be developed an opposing principle which placed great emphasis on the love of God. How natural, almost inevitable, that Orthodoxy should beget Heterodoxy. The reactionary movement in the theology of the neighborhood originated with a few Universalists. The "Father of Universalism in America," Rev. John Murray, who had preached in England and Ireland as a Methodist, came to America in 1790, and organized a society called "The Independent Christian Church," at Gloucester, Massachusetts. His distinguishing tenet was the doctrine of the final salvation of all souls from sin, through Jesus Christ, who was regarded as holding a delegated divinity. Hosea Ballou, a convert from the Calvinist Baptists, took up the liberal cause in 1790, and published the work that is regarded by Universalists as epoch-making, "A Treatise on Atonement."

Perhaps the leading spirits in the reactionary movement in the Ridgeville neighborhood were the ex-Quaker farmer and his ex-Presbyterian wife, father and mother of the unhappy youth who was always seeking the true faith, always under conviction, never convertible. As it was necessary to procure, in advance, subscriptions to provide for building a suitable house of worship for the protesters, a society was formed, and the task of drafting a constitution was delegated to Tip's father. According to this document, the purpose of the founders of the new organization was to provide a place of congregation, and a kind of public religious instruction that would prove efficacious in advancing the intellectual and social, as well as the moral and spiritual, progress of those who might avail themselves of the opportunity which it offered. In order to prevent misunderstanding in regard to the function of the church edifice, the following clause was inserted in the constitution: "Now be it distinctly understood that

said house shall always be open and free for all kinds of religious meetings and for other purposes." Records show that the house was completed in August, 1846, at a total cost of $1,233.00. An article of agreement with the first pastor of the society reads

"We the undersigned, believing that the preaching of the Gospel at stated periods is calculated to improve the moral condition of mankind and increase the sum of human happiness, do agree to pay to the Treasurer of the Universalist Society of this place for the use of Win. B. Linen, to aid him in supporting his family, the sums annexed to our names respectively, in quarterly payments, conditioned that he shall preach for us two sermons each month, one at 11 o'clock A.M., and one at 3 o'clock P.M., for the coming year, to commence on the second Sabbath in July."

The teachings of the innovating pulpit were regarded by many, perhaps by most, in the neighborhood as heretical and dangerous. The very morality for which they stood was considered as in some sense a stumbling-block. The motive of preaching, as commonly conceived, was not "the improvement of the moral condition of mankind and the increase of human happiness," but was rather to "convert" the unregenerate, and provide against contingencies by fire in another world. Often it was asserted by those opposed to the Liberal Sect, that "a good man who has not experienced a 'change of heart,' is decidedly worse off than a bad man who has been born again.'" Another saying common upon the lips of opposers was that it is best to be on the safe side, and that even should the evangelical faiths prove erroneous, the departed soul of the Methodist, Baptist, or Presbyterian, would be sure of the Universalist Heaven; but, if evangelicism had the truth, then what would become of the soul of the heretic?

The stress of the new preaching was placed upon the infinite goodness of God, and such texts as "Flee from the wrath to come," were never quoted. The doctrine of the divine fatherhood and of the brotherhood of all men, and the assurance that "His tender mercies are over all his works," and that sin brings its own inevitable punishment in this world, were kept constantly in mind. Some of the favorite texts were: "God is Love"; "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive"; "He shall wipe away tears from all faces"; "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me"; "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, the Lord will take thee up." Each service was a love feast; the intensity, the fervor, the spiritual rapture, which accompanied the ordinary meetings in the new church, were unexpected phenomena which elicited general remark. Such ecstasy was supposed to belong exclusively to Methodism. Whatever might be the criticism adverse to the liberal theology, no one accused the Universalists of any lack of devotion, or of any disposition to scoff.

But there was much doctrinal preaching, much protest, much challenge, much debate. People took an absorbing interest in textual elucidation and proof, and there was much quibbling as to the original meaning of Hebrew and Greek words variously rendered in translation. Among the books collected in the heterogeneous library of

Tip's father, were a good many controversial works; and frequent reference was made to Adam Clarke's "Commentary on the Holy Scriptures."

To the boy the mental and spiritual activities inaugurated by the new society in its relation to the older ones afforded a kind of Renaissance and Reformation, including a Revival of Learning, for he became so much interested in the discussions he daily heard, that his personal afflictions of soul were partially forgotten in the healthy business of observing what others were thinking, saying, and doing.

His intellectual awakening, while it opened his eyes to a broader prospect of secular knowledge, increased his interest in those mysterious fields of religious speculation in which it had become a habit of his childhood to wander. Bunyan he almost knew by heart, and in imagination was often on the road with Christian, and Faithful, and that right consolatory comrade, Hopeful. "Baxter's Call," and its fellow volume, Mr. Allein's "Solemn Warnings of the Dead, or an Admonition to Unconverted Sinners," were not forgotten, but they were seldom taken from the shelf. Before he had reached the middle of his teens the boy bad striven with a tough octavo on the "Prophecies" ("Newton's Dissertations"), had tackled Paley's "Natural Theology," and had read with fearful care "Nelson on Infidelity." Later he had a serious tussle with Hitchcock's "Geology," which endeavored to reconcile Moses with Lyell on the subject of Genesis and he perused Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks," with genuine pleasure. A translation of Victor Cousin's "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," fell into his hands, and he picked from its pages, here and there, morsels that nourished. The Bible he faithfully tried to read, in regular course, taking a fresh start every New Year, but not much of it stuck in his memory excepting the stories of the O1d Testament, the four Gospels, and some parts of the Acts of the Apostles, especially the stirring adventures of Saint Paul. There came a period in his life, about the time of his majority, when he was possessed of the idea of becoming a preacher, though he was not clear in his mind what message he had to deliver; but a few years later he went so far as to consult a Doctor of Divinity in regard to the literature of the subject, and the obliging scholar prescribed for him a preliminary course of reading, the only hooks of which that he attempted to study being translations of Mosheim's "Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," and Jouffroy's "History of Philosophy," volumes that he by no means mastered.

All of these books, and a hundred more into which he dipped, left their impression and were influential in helping their reader to "get religion," but did not furnish him with a creed much more definite than that implied in the general conclusion which the pool Dryden reaches in his "Religio Laici," namely:

"But truth by its own sinews will prevail."

As he progressed in his readings and studies, and, growing older, came into contact with men of thought and opinion, those problems which have since been recorded and discussed in such books as Andrew D. White's "A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom," demanding investigation, challenging solution, inevitably appealed to the youth's intellectual curiosity and to his unquenchable desire for truth. The closing years of his minority fell in the period immediately preceding the dawn of the modern day of hold scientific inquiry, and of a new philosophy based on demonstrable facts. All the vast implications of the Theory of Evolution, as promulgated in the writings of Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, and others, exploded former hypotheses of the universe, rendering the earlier and simpler dogmas of belief untenable, and giving impetus to a profounder and more comprehensive study of theology and religion.

Chapter XIV – Politics

Most men are born partisans; they take in their political faith as they imbibe their religious creed, - with their mothers' milk. This was the case of the Buckeye Boy whose political reminiscences are here briefly narrated. He was, to begin with, a Whig by predestination. Wbiggery was thrust upon him before he came into the world, for his father, being an "old line Whig" or "Federalist," who had cast his first presidential vote for John Quincy Adams, and being also a personal admirer of William Henry Harrison, decreed in advance that the child, if it should prove a boy, should be named after the hero of Tippecanoe. The child did prove to be a boy, and he first opened blinking eyes to the light, and began to cry over the evils which beset humanity, in the year of our Lord 1836, when the candidate for whom he was named first ran for President of the United States and was badly beaten in the race by the polite and handsome Martin Van Buren, the eighth of our Chief Magistrates. There exists no evidence to prove that the baby took the slightest interest in Mr. Van Buren's administration or that he had any views concerning the Panic of '37, the Seminole War, the Tariff, or the National Bank. But when in 1840 "Old Tippecanoe" came again into the lists, this time with "Tyler too," against Van Buren, Democrat, and Birney, Abolitionist, the Whig infant, having passed the age of four, was considered by his parents old enough to take a part in the phenomenally successful "log-cabin and hard-cider campaign," and therefore, with other members of the family, he was taken in a farm-wagon a distance of eight miles to hear the renowned Harrison make an electioneering "stump-speech" at a mass meeting which was held, September 12, in a beautiful grove near Lebanon, Warren County, Ohio. The small victim of party zeal was lifted up by his father in order that, over the heads of the crowded, standing audience, he might see the orator where he stood speaking, and the vivid picture then impressed on the boy's memory presents the lively image of a tall, slender man making gestures and talking persuasively to a noisy concourse. As soon as the address was concluded, the child was led to the beflagged platform and there presented to the distinguished man whose namesake he was, and the General patted him on the head, thus convincing Tip's mother of the candidate's political and social fitness for the White House. Tradition insists that the amiable nominee, prophesying that the little William Henry would grow up a good Whig, with his own hand gave the lad a Tippecanoe medal stamped on one side with a portrait of Harrison and on the other side with the semblance of a Buckeye log-cabin.

In the fall of 1844, another presidential campaign was raging, with three candidates in the field, Henry Clay, James K. Polk, and James G. Birney, the last named of these being the antislavery agitator, the press and types of whose newspaper, "The Philanthropist," were thrown by a mob into the Ohio River at Cincinnati, in

1835. Tip, now eight years old "and going on nine," true to his Whig antecedents, was a violent and uncompromising champion of "Harry of the West." He was of the obstinate age to believe and disbelieve and say and do all that an unwavering, "stand pat," party-man could be expected to believe and disbelieve and say and do; and with as much positiveness, noise, and fury as possible. At this stage in his development he took much delight in the sound of fifes and drums and the discharge of guns. He attended every Whig pole-raisin, always taking a hand at the ropes which pulled into position the tall, white, ash-sapling, or still taller pole made of several ash-trees spliced together mast-fashion, and decorated with a flag and streamers and perhaps a living raccoon. The ashtree was the Whig timber, in honor of Clay, who lived at Ashland, near Lexington, Kentucky. By no means would a Whig assist in raising a hickory pole,- the emblem of Jackson and the "Locofocos." Such was the enmity between the parties that, in the darkness of night, poles were sometimes silently bored down with augers, - ash-poles by Democrats, hickory-poles by Whigs. The patriots with whom "Tip" rallied, sang vociferously such campaign songs as,

"Heigh! ho! for Clay we go!
The Buckeye Boys of O-hi-o!"

The ardent juveniles formed a kind of military troop, supplying themselves with abundant ammunition consisting of balls of yellow clay, with which missiles war was waged against any and all standing battalions or solitary pickets in the shape of poke-stalks to be found by roadside or in field. Every proud pokeweed in the neighborhood was volleyed and thundered to destruction by clay balls; and though this mode of political contest might be regarded as mud-slinging of a very gross and palpable description, it had its parallel in the vituperative oratorical conflicts of the period, and the urchins who practiced it suffered no pangs of remorse for employing coarse and violent methods in a good cause, but, on the contrary, felt proud of their objective method of literally overcoming poke by clay. Notwithstanding the valiant service these non-voting allies rendered the cause for which they shouted, and sang, and fought, Polk was elected by a majority of 170 electoral votes against 105.

When in 1846 the war 'with Mexico was precipitated, and our hero, then ten years old, was learning "the rudiments," under the instruction of the strict Yankee schoolmaster who gave him the "Reward of Merit," several of the young men of the neighborhood, who had themselves been pupils in the Ridgeville school, enlisted as volunteers and joined Taylor's army on the Rio Grande. The younger patriots, chafing under the daily drill and irksome tactics of the recitation room, heard of this heroic business with big-eyed admiration and used to talk about it at recess. One day some of them fancied they heard an ominous booming as of cannon far away, and having vague

ideas of the distance to Mexico, they surmised that a battle was in progress at Monterey, and wondered whether Jo Githens would be killed. Every lad was crazy about the war and eager to get hold of a pictorial paper or of some cheap and gaudy lithograph, showing the exploit of Captain May on horseback, or a furious onslaught against guerrillas or "rancheros of the poisoned lance." The resounding Spanish names, like Cherubusco, were almost as exciting as an actual bombardment might be.- The blood of boyhood, like Semprouius, cried: "My voice is still for war," but, while we hurrahed for Taylor and Scott, and hated Santa Anna, poor man! with all the prejudice of fanatical patriotism, pity for the Mexican common soldier was mingled with our rejoicing in American victory.

The Boy's father, though a Whig, was a strong anti-slavery man, who indoctrinated his sons with abolition sentiments. Thomas Corwin's famous speech, in 1847, against the Mexican War, produced a tremendous impression in Warren County, especially in Lebanon, the county-seat and the home of the illustrious orator. "Tom Corwin, the Wagoner Boy," was a household word in Ridgeville and vicinity. The air was saturated with anecdotes of the great man, and even the small boys could feel the force of his marvelous eloquence and enjoy the irresistible comicality of his facial expression when telling a ludicrous story. "Tip" heard Corwin speak more than once at the Lebanon bar and on the stump, and Tom Corwin had become to him an idol. Andrew D. White, in his "Autobiography," describes Corwin as "the most famous stump-speaker of his time, perhaps of all times; a man of great physical, intellectual, and moral vigor; powerful in argument, sympathetic in manner, of infinite wit and Humor." The well-nigh universal excitement caused by the speech on the Mexican War, not only affected the minds of mature men and women; it also spread among the boys and girls, eliciting much comment, pro and con. Such was the effect of one memorable sentence in the speech, (the sentence which forever destroyed Corwin's chance of becoming President,) that, upon a certain occasion, in Janney's woods, which lay just opposite to the playground of the Ridgeville schoolhouse, our Boy, having stained his hands with the red juice of some wild berry, mounted a stump and exclaimed to his assembled playmates: "If I were a Mexican as I am an American, I would tell you, 'Have you not room in your own country to bury your dead men? If you come into mine, we will greet you with bloody hands, and welcome you to hospitable graves.'" This reactionary sentiment was not strong enough, however, to hold in check the war spirit in the bosom of the Boy who, while be would have preferred Clay or Corwin, to lead his party in the campaign of I848, was easily reconciled to accept the popular choice, Zachary Taylor, though Mr. Webster had declared, on hearing the result of the convention, that the "nomination was one in nowise fit to be made." But military prestige always works wonders, and the name "Old Zach," or "Old Rough-and-Ready," was a name to conjure with. General Cass, with his straight democracy, and

Mr. Van Buren, with his “Wilmot Proviso,” were outvoted, and Taylor was elected. Be it here set down, that, at this political crisis, the father, Whig as he was, accorded with Webster's opinion, and, for the only time in his life, bolted his usual ticket, voting for Van Buren.

A schoolboy in his early teens learns fast and acquires much in many lines. Teachers are the radical reformers of political and of social abuses. They are the true builders of the State. But the education of recitation rooms is by no means the only important education that life affords. The schooling out of school furnishes a chief part of practical education, even in these our modern academic days, and, in the comparatively early and more primitive period with which this narrative deals, it was of much greater relative value, particularly in country places. The custom prevailed of attending public meetings of all kinds and of talking over the points made by the speakers. This is the way, according to Dennis Flanks, that Lincoln managed to learn so much of public matters, at so early an age. “He learned,” says the record, “by sight, scent, and hearing. he heard all that was said, and talked over and over the questions heard. Went to political and other speeches, and would bear all sides and opinions, talk them over, discuss them, agreeing or disagreeing.” In accordance with this democratic theory and method the Ridgeville boy was brought up. Whenever public announcement was made, through the newspaper or by means of posters, that an important meeting of any kind was to be held in Lebanon or Waynesville or Franklin or Dayton or any other accessible village, his father was very likely to propose going to hear the speeches, and he usually allowed Tip to go along. In this way opportunity was afforded from time to time of bearing many prominent local speakers and some distinguished persons from a distance, including such men as Corwin, Thomas Ewing, R. C. Schenck, L. D. Campbell, Thomas Morris, Thomas L. Hamer, Benjamin F. Wade, Wilson Shannon, and Salmon P. Chase. On one occasion father and son went to a political meeting to bear a campaign-speech delivered by Hon. William Allen, ex-governor of Ohio, the famous Democratic Senator who in Congress originated the bellicose slogan, "fifty-four forty or fight,” - an orator who, with stentorian voice, multiplied what seemed to the boy unanswerable arguments against the Whig Party, which organization, Allen thundered, was responsible for all the public ills of the time, and had not advocated or enacted a single good law in Congress. When questioned by the son, about the truth of this astounding arraignment of his party, the father only laughed and said: “O, my son, that's politics. Old Bill Allen can make you believe anything, merely because he talks so loud and looks so fierce.”

The oratory of Fourth of July celebrations, pole-raisings, and election campaigns, and the talk engendered by it, were supplemented, in the political education of the son, by a good deal of desultory reading in newspapers. Along with the “Western Farmer,” and the “Lily of the Valley,” came regularly to the farm the “Western Star,” the “Dollar

Weekly Commercial," and, for a period, the "Dayton Journal," the "New York Weekly Tribune," and "Noah's Sunday Mercury." Besides these "abstracts and brief chronicles of the time," the mail brought divers and sundry speeches reprinted from Congressional Records, sent forth freely to "constituents," under the privilege of the frank. Now and then Tip had the curiosity to peep into these speeches, especially into those where there were many "interruptions," or much "laughter" or "applause," indicated in brackets.

Better than hearing speeches or reading newspapers and pamphlets, as an agency for informing and developing the young mind, was the Debating Society, a peculiarly Western institution which reached its highest development in the first half of the nineteenth century. Ability to think to a point, to hold arguments in mind, to weigh evidence, and to form a logical opinion, was cultivated in this type of popular lyceum. The effort which it cost a boy to stand up, before an audience, in a country schoolhouse, and stammer: "Mr. President, I think pursuit is better than possession," or "I believe the pulpit is mightier than the bar," put his whole mind and body to a test, and gave the tyro a hopeful start in thought, expression, and self-control; and when later he attempted, on his feet, to prove that "state sovereignty" is preferable to "centralization," or that "African slavery should be abolished," he took intense interest in such exercise of his faculties, and perhaps received more benefit from it than from routine lessons in his text-books.

A debating society was established at Ridgeville by the Quaker schoolmaster, Isaac S. Morris, who came into the district in November, 1851. This society taught everybody in the neighborhood something of everything, and set even the dullest intellects to meditating on subjects the most vital and invigorating. It met every Saturday evening, in the schoolhouse, which, on exciting occasions, was thronged with visitors, every seat in the room being filled, and the narrow aisles crowded with standing auditors.

Participation in the duties of the debating society enlarged the horizon of many minds. Schoolboys were encouraged to share in the discussions; and it was at the exciting crisis of the Kossuth fever in 1852 that Tip plucked up courage to precipitate his tremulous maiden speech upon an indulgent audience, in the course of a heated debate on the proposition: "*Resolved*, That the United States should intervene in behalf of Kossuth and the oppressed Hungarians." Needless to say the speech was on the side of liberty or death! When the speaker rose, or, rather, when he was pushed out from his seat by an urgent comrade, his knees shook as with an ague, and when he sat down, amid good-natured applause, his heart beat hard and fast as if he had sprinted around a race-course.

Perhaps the inspiring cause that prompted the country boy, notwithstanding his extreme natural bashfulness, to engage in the debate concerning the relations of the

United States with Hungary, was an address delivered by Kossuth in Cincinnati in February, 1852, in which the Patriot said: "I am about to bid an affectionate farewell to Cincinnati, and through Cincinnati, to the Commonwealth of Ohio, that bright morning star of consolation and of hope, risen from the West over the gloomy horizon of Hungary's and of Europe's dark night. -- How I long for words of flame to express all the warmth of my heartfelt gratitude! And still how poor I feel in words, precisely because my heart is so full; so full that I can scarcely speak-because every pulsation of my blood is a fervent prayer to God for the Glory and Happiness of Ohio." Such fervors of eloquence aroused in the schoolboy's consciousness a sense of general humanity, and indefinite yearnings to know something of the larger history and politics which concern the whole world.

About this time another stimulus to moral enthusiasm and political zeal bordering upon fanaticism, intensely affected the youth, - a stimulus for which he was indirectly indebted to his teacher, Isaac Morris. That gentleman, though not in the habit of reading fiction, had become deeply interested in a serial story which was appearing in the columns of the "National Era," a weekly newspaper published in Washington, D. C. So forcible, so vivid, so fascinating, did the successive chapters of this absorbing narrative seem to his Quaker mind, that he called the attention of others to their remarkable quality, and took the trouble each week to send his copy of the paper to Rose Cottage, where all the members of the family, including Tip, eagerly read the realistic tale, - which was none other than "Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly."

Not long after the publication of Mrs. Stowe's celebrated novel, there appeared in the "Miami Visitor," a local newspaper issued in Waynesville, Ohio, a poetical effusion entitled "Liberty," by one signing himself "William." A note to the editor, accompanying the verses and explaining their origin and motive, read thus: "Mr. Roberts: - The following lines were written after reading 'Cabin and Parlor,' one of the would-be replies to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' The author of this work seems to think that if a person is comfortably clothed and has enough to eat, it is a matter of no great importance whether he is free or not." The protesting "Lines," which were originally scrawled with a lead-pencil, on a fence-rail, at the edge of a field where the indignant bard was plowing corn, conclude with a glowing and triumphant exhortation to Universal Nature in behalf of Liberty and Equality.

It was while the brain of our political neophyte was hot and dizzy with the double ferment of Hungarian revolt and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," that the presidential campaign of 1852 began to boil and bubble. There were three candidates: Franklin Pierce, Winfield Scott, and John P. Hale. The comparative merits of these three men of widely differing political persuasion came up for discussion in the debating society, and the attitude of the now extremely radical disciple of Kossuth and Mrs. Stowe may be

inferred from the circumstance that, when questions proposed for debate were sent up to the president's desk, he contributed the proposition: "Resolved, That Franklin Pierce has no claim to the suffrages of the American people, either as statesman, soldier, or citizen." The President of the Debating Society, who was a Democrat, on hearing this read aloud, glanced angrily round the room, and asked sharply, "Who handed that in?" to which the clerk answered, pointing to the offender, "That young ratsbane." That young ratsbane, now the bolter, was in favor of John P. Hale, the Free-soil candidate, despite the fact that his sire and political monitor stuck to General Scott, not because he greatly admired "Old-Fuss-and-Feathers," but because of inveterate loyalty to Whig traditions. Pierce won the battle, and his triumph was celebrated by the Democrats of the community, who assembled in the principal "store" of Ridgeville, where, tapping a keg of beer, they drank and made merry to the discomfiture of Schoolmaster Morris, an out-and-out Free-soiler, who, as a specially invited guest, attended the ratification-meeting.

In 1856 the Buckeye Boy whose course we have followed up to the verge of his legal majority, though his energies were now mainly engrossed with the tasks of student life, championed with enthusiasm the virtues of John Charles Fremont, the "Pathfinder," Republican candidate for President; but his hope and enthusiasm did not avail to prevent the election of James Buchanan.

During the winter of 1857, and the spring of 1858, the young partisan was traveling in the South, taking "views afoot," in order to learn for himself what he could about negro slavery, of which so much had been said and written. Returning, early in the summer, by way of St. Louis, on his homeward journey he passed through Illinois, and having occasion to stop in the then very small town of Mattoon, he there saw, on the border of the prairie, a recently constructed platform, embowered with branches of withering green. He was told that, on the previous day, from that stand, public speakers had addressed a vast multitude of people, on political issues growing out of the pending contest between the "Rail-Splitter" and the "Little Giant." The Republican State Convention, which met in Springfield, Illinois, on the sixteenth of January, 1858, had passed a resolution declaring, "That Abraham Lincoln is the first and only choice of the Republicans of Illinois for the United States Senate, as the successor of Stephen A. Douglas." Less than three years later, at the National election of November, 1860, Tip cast his first presidential vote, one of 1,866,000 ballots for Abraham Lincoln.