## THE LIGHT IN THE PLEARING

A TALE OF THE NORTH COUNTRY IN THE TIME OF SILAS WRIGHT By IRVING BACHELLER

> EBEN HOLDEN, D'RI AND I, DARREL OF THE BLESSED ISLES, KEEPING UP WITH LIZZIE, ETC., ETC.

> > Minerva. When Aunt Deel returned

ner-she said: "I'll have to tell your

"Oh please don't tell my Uncle Pea-

"Ayes! I'll have to tell him," she

For the first time I looked for him

"My stars! he sneaked into the par-

for and tipped over the what-not and

He stopped as he was wont to do on

the threshold of strong spinions and

tell what minute they'll jump on ye.

The rest of the conversation

smashed that beautiful wax wreath!"

Uncle Peabody-ayes!"

her voice as she said:

momentous resolutions.

and carried me unstairs.

gently:

"What now?" he asked.

answered firmly.

## PREFACE

The Light in the Clearing shone upon many things and mostly upon those which, above all others, have impassioned and perpetuated the Spirit of America and which, just now, seem to me to be worthy of attention. I believe that spirit to be the very candle of the Lord which, in this dark and windy night of time, has flickered so that the souls of the faithful have been afraid. But let us be of good cheer. It is shining brighter as I write and, under God, I believe it shall, by and by, he seen and loved of all men.

One self-contained, Homeric figure, of the remote country side in which I was born, had the true Spirit of Democracy and shed its light abroad in the senate of the United States and the capitol at Alisany. He carried the Candle of the Lord, it led him to a height of self-forgetfulness achieved by only two others—Washiarton and Lincoln. Yet I have been surprised by the profound and general ignorance of this generation regarding the carried of the self-forgetfulness achieved hy only two others—Washiarton and Lincoln. Yet I have been surprised by the profound and general ignorance of this generation regarding the carrier of Silas Wright.

The distinguished senator who served to his side for many years, Thomas H. Henton of Missouri, has this to say of this Wright in his Thirty Years' View:

"He refused cablinet appointments under his fast friend Van Horen and under

dilas Wright in his Thirty Years' View:
"He refused cabinet appointments under his fast friend Van Boren and under Polk, whom he may be said to have decised. He refused a seat on the bench of the Supreme court of the United States; he refused instantly the nomination in 1844 for vice president; he refused to be put in nomination for the presidency. He spent that time is declining affice which others did in winning it. The indices he did accept, it might well be said, were thrust upon him. He was born treat and above office and unwillingly descended to it."

do much by way of preparing the reader meet the great commoner in those

Wright of being a spoilsman, the only warrant for which claim would seem to be his remark in a letter; "When our memies accuse us of feeding our friends assead of them never let them lie in tell-

He was, in fact, a herman being, through and through, but so upright that they used to say of him that he was "as honest as any man under heaven or in it."

For my knowledge of the color and spirit of the time I am indebted to a long rourse of reading in its books, newspapers and periodicals, notably the North American Review, the United States Magazine and Democratic Keview, the New York Mirror, the Knickerbocker, the St. iawrence Republican, lieuton's Thirty Years' View, Bancroft's Life of Martin Van Buren, histories of Wright and his time by Hammond and Jentins, and to many manuscript letters of the distinguished commoner in the New York public library and in the possession of Mr. Samuel Wright of Weybridge, Vermont.

To any who may think that they discover portraits in these pages I desire to say that all the characters—save only Silas Wright and President Van Buren and Purvises and Illusies and Aunt Deels and Uncles Peabod a braimost every rusile neighborhood those days, and I regret to add that Roving Kate was on many roads. The case of Amos Grimshaw hears a striking resemblance to that of young Silas ford, executed long ago in Malone was, in fact, a herman being, through | be I goin' to make ye remember it?"

a striking resemblance to that of young Sickford, executed long ago in Malone for the particulars of which case I am indebted to my friend, Mr. H. L. Ives of

THE AUTHOR.

BOOK ONE

Which Is the Story of the Candle and the Compass.

CHAPTER I.

The Melon Harvest.

Once upon a time I owned a waternelon." I say once because I never did t again. When I got through owning that melon I never wanted another. The time was 1831; I was a boy of seven and the melon was the first of ill my harvests.

I didn't know much about myself hose days except the fact that my mme was Bart Baynes and, further, hat I was an orphan who owned a watermelon and a little spotted ben and lived on Rattlerond in a neighbortood called Lickitysplit. I lived with ny Aunt Deel and my Uncle Penbody Saynes on a farm. They were brother end sister-he about thirty-eight and me a little beyond the far-distant goal of forty.

My father and mother died in a scourge of diphtheria that swept the seighborhood when I was a boy of

A few days after I arrived in the some of my aunt and uncle I siviv enlered the parlor and climbed the whatsot to examine some white flowers on ts top shelf and tipped the whole thing over, scattering its burden of albums, wax flowers and seashells on the floor. My aunt came running an her tiptoes and exclaimed; "Mercy ! Come right out o' here this minuteyou pent!"

I took some rather long stens going out, which were due to the fact that Aunt Deel had hold of my hand. While t ant weeping she went back into the parlor and began to pick up things.

How well I remember that little as phlage of flower ghosts in wax1 They had no more right to associate with human beings than the ghosts of (able. Uncle Penbody used to call them the "Minervy flowers" because they were a present from his Aunt

hend a kind of watermelen thump with the middle finger of her right hand and with a curious look in her eyes. Uncle Peabody used to call it a "snaptions took." Almost always he whacked the bed with his slipper. There were exceptions, however, and, by and by, I came to know in each case the desti-nation of the slipper, for if I had done anything which really afflicted my con-science that strip of leather second to know the truth; and found its way to

Aunt Deel tolled incessently. She dusted and sewed and knit from maraing until night. She lived is mortal fear that company would come and find her unprepared—Alms Jones or Jabez Linceln and his wife, or Ben and Mary Humphries, or "Mr. and Mrs. Horace Dunkelberg." These were the people of whom she talked when the neighbors came in and when she was not talking of the Bayneses. I observed to the kitchen where I sat-a sorrow- that she always said "Mr. and Mrs. ing little refuges hunched up in a cor- Horace Dunkelberg." They were the conversational ornaments of our home.
"As Mrs. Horace Dunkelberg says," or, "as I said to Mr. Horace Dunkelberg." were phrases calculated to establish our social standing. I supposed that the world was peopled by Joneses, Lincolns, Humphries and Dunkelbergs, with dread at the window and when but mostly by Dunkelbergs. These lat-he came I hid in a closet and heard for were very rich people who lived in

I know, now, how dearly Aunt Deel "I guess you'll have to take that boy loved her brother and me. I must have been a great trief to that woman of forty unused to the pranks of chil-Naturally I turned from her to my Uncle Peabody as a refuge and a understanding and what more, of an "Jerusalem four-corners!" he exhelp in time of trouble, with increasing fendness. He had no knitting or sewing to do and when Uncle Peabody saf in the house he gave all his time to the and we w athered many a sterm together as we sat silently in his favorite corner, of an evening, when I drowned in my own cries and Uncle always went to sleep in his arms.

and bit it.

"Now, Bub, you and me have got to "It appears to me there's an awfal be careful. What-nots and albums draft blowin' down your throat," said and wax flowers and haircloth sofys Uncle Penbody. "You ain't no busiare the most dang'rous critters in St. ness eatin' a melon seed."

> "Cause It was made to put in the ground. Didn't you know it was alive?"

He put a number of the seeds in the ground and covered them, and said that part of the garden should mine. I watched it every day and and by two vines came up. One sickened and died in dry weather. Uncle Peabody said that I must water the other every day. I did it faith-

It was hard work, I thought, to go down into the garden, night and morning, with my little pail full of water, but uncle said that I should get my pay when the meion was ripe. I had Mrs. Wills ran out of the house and also to keep the wood-box full and parted us. Our blood was het, and feed the chickens. They were odious tasks. When I asked Aunt Deel what I should get for doing them she answeret quickly:

ayes!"

When I asked what were "nospanks" she told me that they were part of the wages of a good child. I was better paid for my care of the watermeion vine, for its growth was me sured with a string every day and kept me interested. One morning I found five blossoms on it. I picked one and carried it to Aunt Deel. Another I stroyed in the tragedy of catching bumblebee which had crawled into its cup. In due time three small melons appeared. When they were as big as a baseball I picked two of them. One I tasted and threw away as I ran to the pump for relief. The other hurled at a dog on my way to

I knew that my sins were responsiman countenance.

At last Uncle Peabody agreed with me that it was about time to pick the melon. I decided to nick it immediately after meeting on Sunday, so that He called back to her: "I wouldn't I could give it to my aunt and uncle a' cared so much if it hadn't 'a' been at dinner-time. When we got home I ran for the garden. My feet and those of our friends and neighbors Aunt Deel. Don't ever speak o' that had literally worn a path to the mel-In eager haste I got my little You scoot around to the barn, an' wheelbarrow and ran with it to the I'll be there in a minute and fix ye end of that path. There I found sp." nothing but broken vines! The meion had vanished. I ran back to the and I ran around to the lane and up house almost overcome by a feeling to the stable. Uncle Peabody met of alarm, for I had thought long of me there in a moment and brought a that hour of pride when I should pall of water and washed my face bring the melon and present it to my so that I felt and looked more respect-

"Uncle Peabody," I shouted, "my melon is gone."

must 'a' stole ft." "But it was my melon," I said with

a trembling voice. "Yes, and I vum it's too had! But,

come and take what don't belong to

There were tears in my eyes when 1 nakest

"They'll bring it back, won't they?"

"Never!" said Uncle Peabedy, "Pm My heart best fast at the afreid they've et it up."

He had no sooner said it than a the legendary Dunkelbergs. ery broke from my lips, and I sank looked me over from top to to down upon the grass meaning and "Reavens!" he exclaimed. "Go down sobbing. I lay amidst the ruins of to the brook and wash the mud off the simple faith of childheed. It was yer feet an' legs." as if the world and att the joys bad I ran for the b

Aunt Deel spoke in a low, kindly bern blow. tone and came and lifted me to my

feet very tenderly.

"Come, Bart, don't feel savabout say. that old melou," said she, "It ain't

worth it. Come with me. Pm going to give you a present—ayes I be!"

I was still crying when she took which I had seen in one of my picme to her trank, and offered the grateful ansuragement of candy and a belt, all embroidered with bits and white bends.

He stood for helf a moment looking the stood for helf a moment looking.

"Now you see, Bart, how low and mean anybody is that takes what his right hand in his pocket. I heard don't belong to 'em ayest They're a little lingle of coins down where snakes! Everybody hates 'em an' his hand was. It excited my curies-stamps on 'em when they come in ity. He took a step toward me and eight-ayes!"

the watermelon had also taken from me something I was never to have again, and a very wonderful thing it was-faith in the goodness of men. My eyes had seen evil. The world had committed its first offense against me and my spirit was no longer the white and beautiful thing it had been Still, therein is the beginning of wisdom and, looking down the long vista of the years. I thank God for the dren and the tender offices of a moth- great barvest of the lost watermelon. Better things had come to its place-I have vainly tried to estimate.

one thing that sudden revelation of the heart of childhood had lifted my aunt's out of the cold storage of a puritanic spirit, and warmed it into new life and opened its door for me.

In the afternoon she sent me over Wills' to borrow a little tea. I stopped for a few minutes to play with Henry Wills-a boy not quite a year older than I. While playing there I discovered a piece of the rind of my melon in the douryard. On that piece of rind I saw the cross which I had made one day with my thumb-nail. It was intended to indicate that the melon was solely and wholly mine. I felt a flush of anger. "I hate you," I said as I approached

"I hate you," he answered. "You're a snake!" I said

hire.

We now stood, face to face and breast to breast, like a pair of young roosters. He gave me a shove and told me to go home. I gave him a shove and told him I wouldn't. I pushed up close to him again and we glared into each other's even.

Suddenly he spat in my face. gave him a scratch on the forehead with my finger-nails. Then we fell opon each other and rolled on the ground and hit and scratched with feline ferocity.

eaking through the skin of our faces little.

"He pitched on me," Henry explained.

I couldn't speak

"Go right home—this minute—you rrat!" said Mrs. Willis in sager. 'Here's your tea. Don't you ever come bere again."

I took the ten and started down the that was for me! I dreaded to face my aunt and uncle. Coming through the grove down by our gate I met Uncle Peabody. With the keen insight of the father of the prodigal son he had seen me coming "a long way off" and shouted:

"Well, here ye be-I was kind worried. Bub."

Then his eye caught the look of de jection in my gait and figure. He hurried toward me. He stopped as I ame sobbing to his feet.

"Why, what's the matter?" he asked cently, as he took the tea cup from ny hand, and sat down upon his heels. I could only fall into his arms and express myself in the grief of childbood. He hugged me close and begged me to tell him what was the mat-"That Wills boy stole my melon,

"Oh, no, he didn't," said Uncle Pea

pody. "Yes he did. I saw a piece o' the rin'.

"Well by-" said Uncle Peabody, topping, as usual, at the edge of the

"He's a snake." I added. "And you fit and he scratched you

out the Baynes-Wills foud had begun

It led to many a fight in the school

vard and on the way home. We were

ntensity as it continued.

topped and looked intently.

"Jerusalem four-corners!" he

evenly matched that our quarrel

ip that way?" "I scratched him, too,"

"Don't you say a word about it to "You mean a father?" "Yes." niserable melon ag'in to anybody.

"Well, we'll play we're married and that you have just got home from a ourney. You go out in the woods He went by the road with the tea and then you come home and I'll meet you at the door."

> glad enough to see her. "You must kiss me," she prompted

The worst was over for that day, gerly-like one picking up a hot coal and she caught me in her arms and kissed me three times while her soft hair threw its golden veil over our faces.

"Oh, I'm so glad to see you," she said as she drew away from me and shook back her hair.

"Now go to sleep and I'll tell you

Then she told pretty tales of fairies and of grand ladles and noble gentlemen who were gold coats and swords and diamonds and silks, and

nel words in such a won-... /. I dare say it prospered ine mystery by which its meaning

were partly hidden. I had many questions to ask and she told me what were fairles and silks and diamonds I ran for the brook and before I and grand ladies and noble gentlemen. had returned to my uncle I heard the We sat down to one of our familiar

dinners of salt pork and milk gravy and apple pie now enriched by sweet bergs! Come guick!" it seemed to nickles and preserves and frosted A query had eftered my mind and

soon after we had begun catting I asked:

"Aust Deel, what is the difference between a boy and a girl?"

There was a little silence in my aunt drew in her breath and exclaimed, "W'y !" and turned very red down at me from a great beight with and covered her face with her anp-kin. Uncle Peabody laughed so loudhis right head in his pocket. I heard ly that the chickens began to eachle. Mr. and Mrs. Dunkelberg also covered their faces. Aunt Deel rose and went I retreated. I feared, a little, this to the store and shoved the tempot The abomination of the Lord was , big. lion-like man. My fears left me along, exclaiming: suddenly when he spoke in a small

dness gracious sakes alive!" The tes slopped over on the stove Uncle Peabody laughed louder and Mr. Dunkelberg's face was purple. Shep came running into the house just as I ran out of it. I had made up my mind that I had done some thing worse than tipping over a whatnot. Thoroughly frightened I fied and took refuge behind the ash-house, where Sally found me. I knew of one thing I would never do again. She coaxed me into the grove where we had another play spell.

I needed just that kind of thing. and what a time it was for me! A pleasant sadness comes when I think of that day-it was so long age. As the Dunkelbergs left us I stood looking down the road on which they were disappearing. That evening my ears caught a note of sadness in the voice of the katydids, and memory began to play its part with me. Best of all I remembered the kisses and the bright blue eyes and the soft curly hair with the smell of roses in it.

CHAPTER II.

Meet the Silent Woman and Siles Wright, Jr.

Amos Grimshaw was there in our dooryard the day that the old ragged woman came along and told our fortunes-she was called Rovin' Kate, and was said to have the gift of "second sight," whatever that may be. It was a bright autumn day and the leaves lay deep in the edge of the woodlands. She spoke never a word but stood pointing at her palm and then at Amos and at me,

Aunt Deel nodded and said: "Ayes, Kate-tell their fortunes if re've anything to say-ayes!"

She brought two sheets of paper and the old woman sat down upon the grass and began to write with a little stub of a pencil. I have now those fateful sheets of paper covered by the scrawls of old Kate. I remember how she shook her head and sighed and sat benting her forehead with the knuckles of her bony hands after she had looked at the palm of Amos. Swiftly the point of her pencil ran over and up and down the sheet like the movements of a frightened serpent. In the silence how loudly the pencil seemed to hiss in its swift lines

and loops. My aunt exclaimed "Mercy!" as she looked at the sheet; for while I knew not, then, the strange device upor the paper, I knew, by and by, that it was a gibbet. Beneath it were the words: "Money thirst shall burn like a fire in him.

She rose and smiled as she looked into my face. I saw a kind, gentle glow in her eyes that reassured me. She clapped her hands with joy. She examined my palm and grew serious and stood looking thoughtfully at the setting sun.

I see, now, her dark figure standing against the sunlight as it stood that day with Amos in its shadow What a singular eloquence in her pose and gestures and in her silence! I remember how it bound our tongues -that silence of hers!

The woman turned with a kindly smile and sat down in the grass again and took the sheet of paper and resting it on a yellow-covered book he gan to write these words.

"I see the longing of the helper. One, two, three, four great perils shall strike at him. He shall not "Now you be my husband," said be afraid. God shall fill his heart with laughter. I hear guns, I hear many voices. His name is in them. He shall be strong. The powers of darkness shall fear him, he shall be a lawmaker and the friend of God and of many people, and great men shall bow to his judgment and he shall-"

She began shaking her head thoughtfully and did not finish the sentence, and by and by the notion came to me that some unpleasant vision must have halted her pencil.

Aunt Deel brought some luncheon wrapped in paper and the old woman took it and went away. My aunt folded the sheets and put them in her trunk and we thought no more of them until-but we shall know soon what reminded us of the prophet woman.

The autumn passed swiftly. I went to the village one Saturday with Uncle Peabody in high hope of seeing the Dunkelbergs, but at their door we learned that they had gone up the river on a picnic. What a blow it was to me! Tears flowed down my cheeks and I clung to my uncle's hand and walked back to the main street of the village. A squad of small boys jeered and stuck out their tongues at me. It was pity for my sorrows, no doubt, that led Uncle Pegbody to take me to the tavern for dinner, where they were assuaged by cakes and jellies and chicken ple

At Christmas I got a picture-book and forty raisins and three sticks of candy with red stripes on them and a jew's-harp. That was the Christmas we went down to Aunt Lina's to spend the day and I helped myself to two pieces of cake when the plate was passed and cried because they all laughed at my greediness. It was the day when Aunt Lize's boy, Truman. got a sliver watch and chain and her daughter Mary a gold ring, and when all the relatives were invited to come and be convinced, once and for all, of Uncle Roswell's prosperity, and be filled with envy and reconciled with jelly and preserves and roast turkey with sage dressing and mince and chicken pie! What an amount of preparation we had made for the journey, and how long we had talked about

In the spring my uncle bired a mon to work for us-a noisy, brawny, charp-featured fellow with keen gray eyes, of the name of Dug Draper. Aunt Deel hated him. I feared him but regarded him with great hope because he had a funny way of winking at me with one eye across the table and, further, because he could sing and did sing while he workedsongs that rattled from his lips in a way that amused me greatly. Then, too, he could rip out words that had a new and wonderful sound in them. I made up my mind that he was likely to become a valuable asset when I heard Aunt Deel saw to my Uncle Pea-

"You'll have to send that loafer away, right now, ayes, I guess you will.

Uncle Peabody didn't know it but myself had begun to suspect it, and that hour the man was sent away, and I remember that he left in anger with a number of those new words flying from his lins. A forced march to the upper room followed that event. Uncle Peabody explained that it was wicked to swear-that boys who did it had very bad luck, and mine came in a moment. I never had more of it come along in the same length of time.

After I ceased to play with the say, often, it was a pity that I hadn't somebody of my own age for company. Every day I felt sorry that the Wills boy had turned out so badly, and I doubt not the cat and the shepherd dog and the chickens and Uncle Peabody also regretted his failures, especially the dog and Uncle Penbody, who bore all sorts of indignities for my sake.

He wore a silver watch and chain, which strongly recommended him in my view and enabled me to endure

He let me feel it and look it all ever and I slyly touched the chain with my tongue just to see if it had any taste to it, and Amos told me that his father had given it to him and that it always kept him "kind o'

"Why?" "For fear I'll break er lose it an' git licked," he answered. He took a little yellow paper-cov-

ered book from his pocket and began to read to himself.

"What's that?" I ventured to ask by and by.

I begged him to read out loud and he read from a tale of two robbers named Thunderbolt and Lightfoot who lived in a cave in the mountains. They were bold, free, swearing men who rode beautiful horses at a wild gallop and carried guns and used them freely and with unerring skill and helped themselves to what they want-

He stopped, by and by, and confided to me the fact that he thought he would run away and join a band of

"How do you run away?" I asked. "Just take the turnplke and keep toward the mountains. When ye meet a band o' robbers give 'em the sign an' tell 'em you want to

He went on with the book and read how the robbers had hung a captive who had persecuted them and interfered with their sport. The story explained how they put the rope around the neck of the captive and threw the other end of it over the limb of a tree and pulled the man into

He stopped suddenly and demanded: "Is there a long rope here?"

I pointed to Uncle Peabody's hay rope hanging on a peg.

meaning. He got the rope and threw its end over the big beam. Our old shepherd dog had been nosing the mow near us for rats. Amos caught the dog who, suspecting no harm, came passively to the rope's end. He tied the rope around the dog's neck.

"We'll draw him up on it-it won't burt him any," he proposed.

I looked at him in silence. My heart smote me, but I hadn't courage to take issue with the owner of a



He Belabored the Bed With Tremendous Vigor, Exclaiming "You Dread-

the bed with tremendous vigor. Meanwhile he looked at me and exclaimed: You dreadful child!"

ble for this violence. It frightened me and my cries increased. The door at the bottom of the stairs pened suddenly.

Aunt Deel called. "Don't lose your temper, Peabody. I think you've gone fur 'nough-ayes!" Uncle Penbody stopped and blew as if he were very tired and then I caught a look in his face that reassured me.

the what-not and them Minervy flowers. When a boy tips over a what-not he's goin' it purty strong." "Well, don't be too severe. You'd

better come now and git me a pail o' water-ayes, I think ye had." Uncle Peabody did a lot of sneezing and coughing with his big, red handkerchief over his face and I was not old enough then to understand it. He klased me and took my little hand in his big hard one and led me down the

stnirs. I dreamed that aight that a long-leggod what-not, with a wax wreath in its hands, chased me around the house and caught and bit me on the neck. I called for help and uncle came and found me on the floor and put me back "My wreath! my wreath!" I heard in bed again,

> vay a mun punished a boy was by thumping his bed. I knew that women had a different and less satisfactory method, for I remembered that my nother had spanked me and Aunt Deel and a way of giving my hands and

For a long time I thought that the

washed and scrubbed and notished and in her look and manner. How it

that solemn and penetrating note in Canton village.

Peabody came and lifted me tenderly I was seven years old when Uncle He sat down with me on his lap and Penbody gave me the watermelon hushed my cries. Then he said very seeds, I put one of them in my mouth

Lawrence county. They're purty sav-"Why?" was my query. age. Keep your eye peeled. You can't

More boys have been dragged away "Alive!" I exclaimed. and tore to pleces by 'em than by all "Alive," said he. "I'll show ye." the bears and panthers in the woods. Keep out o' that old parlor. Ye might as well go into a cage o' wolves. How "I don't know." I whimpered and be gan to cry out in fearful anticipation. He set me in a chair, picked up one of his old carpet-slippers and began to

fully and the vine throve.

"Nospanks and bread and butter-

So that last melon on the vine had my undivided affection. It grew in size and reputation, and soon I learned that a reputation is shout the worst thing that a watermelon can acquire while it is on the vine. I mvited everybody that came to the per. house to go and see my watermelon, They looked it over and said pleas I said, and the words came slow with ant things about it. When I was a boy people used to treat children and watermelons with a like solicitude. Both were a subject for jests and produced similar reactions in the hu-

"Well, I van!" said he, "somebody

Bart, you ain't learned yit that there are wicked people in the world who

aimed. "It's Mr. and Mrs. Horace

Mrs. Dunkelberg.

"Sally, This Is Barton Baynes. Can't You Shake Hands With Him?" Said

"The Dunkelbergs !-- the Dunkel-

Mr. Dunkelberg was a big, broad-

squeaky voice that reminded me of

"Little bay, come here and I will

make you a present," said he.

It reminded me of my disappoint-

ment when uncle tried to shoot his

gun at a squirrel and only the cap

I went to him and he laid a silver

piece in the palm of my hand. Aunt

Deel began to hurry about getting din-

ner ready while Uncle Peabody and

I sat down on the porch with our

guests, among whom was a pretty.

blue-eyed girl of about my own age,

the chirping of a bird.

with long, golden-brown hair that hung in curls. "Sally, this is Barton Baynesyou shake hands with him?" said Mrs.

Dunkelberg. With a smile the girl came and offered me her hand and made a funny bow and said that she was glad to ee me. I took her hand awkwardly and made no reply. I had never seen many girls and had no very high opin-

As we sat there I heard the men talking about the great Silas Wright. who had just returned to his home in Canton. He had not entered my consciousness until then.

While I sat listening I felt a tweak of my hair, and looking around I saw the Dunkelberg girl standing behind me with a saucy smile on her face. "Won't you come and play with

me?" she asked. I took her out in the garden to show her where my watermelou had lain. At the moment I couldn't think of anything else to show her. As we walked along I observed that her feet were in dainty shiny button-shoes. Suddenly I began to be ashamed of my feet that were browned by the sunlight and scratched by the briers. The absent watermelon didn't seem to

interest her. "Let's play house in the grove," said she, and showed me how to build a house by laying rows of stones with an opening for a door.

Oddly enough I had heard of hus bands but had only a shadowy notion of what they were. I knew that there was none in our house. "What's that?" I asked.

She laughed and answered: "Somebody that a girl is married to." "Once I had a father," I boasted.

I did as she bade me but I was not

I kissed her very swiftly and gin-

went on for a long time and gathered One June day Uncle Peabedy and from down in the fields, saw a "Golly! this is fun!" I said. me carriage drive in at our gate. He

n story," said she,

"Why ?" "Because this boy has learnt to swear like a pirate-ayes-he has!"

Wills boy Uncle Penbedy used to

One day when Uncle Peabody went for the mail he brought Amos Grimshaw to visit me. He was four years older than I-a freckled, red-haired boy with a large mouth and thin lips.

his air of condescension.

scalrt.

"A story," he answered. "I met a ragged of woman in the road tother day an' she give me a lot of 'em and showed me the pictures an' I got to readin' 'em. Don't you tell anybody 'cause my ol' dad hates stories an' he'd lick me 'til I couldn't stan' if he knew I was readin' 'em."

robbers.

foin.

"Le's hang a captive," he proposed. At first I did not comprehend his

(Continued tomorrow)