

THE LIGHT IN THE CLEARING

A TALE OF THE NORTH COUNTRY IN THE TIME OF SILAS WRIGHT

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EVEN HOLDEN, DRI AND I, DANIEL OF THE BLESSED ISLES,
KEEPING UP WITH LIZZIE, ETC., ETC.

CHARACTER DESIGNER: WALTER D. BROWN

me at the par of my appearance. I met Betsy Price—one of my schoolmates—on the street. She was very cordial and told me that the Dunkelbergs had gone to Saratoga.

"I got a letter from Sally this morning," Betsy went on. "She said that young Mr. Latur was at the same hotel and that he and her father were good friends."

I wonder if she really enjoyed sticking this thorn into my flesh—a thorn which made it difficult for me to follow the advice of the schoolmaster and robbed me of the little peace I might have enjoyed. My faith in Sally wavered up and down until it settled at its wonted level and reassured me.

It was a perfect summer morning and I enjoyed my walk over the familiar road and up into the hill country. The birds seemed to sing a welcome to me. Men and boys I had known waved their hats in the hayfields and looked at me. There are few pleasures in this world like that of a boy getting home after a long absence.

My heart beat fast when I saw the house and my uncle and Purvis coming in from the twenty-acre lot with a load of hay. Aunt Deel stood on the front steps looking down the road. Now and then her waving handkerchief went to her eyes. Uncle Peabody came down the standard off his load and walked toward me.

"Say, stranger, have you seen anything of a fellow by the name of Bart Baynes?" he demanded.

"Have you?" I asked.

"No, sir, I ain't. Gosh a'mighty! Say I what have you done with that boy of our'n?"

"What have you done to our house?" I asked again.

"Built on an addition."

"That's what I've done to your boy," I answered.

"Thunder an' lightning! How you've raised the roof!" he exclaimed as he



"Thunder an' Lightning! How You've Raised the Roof!"

grabbed my satchel. Dressed like a statesman an' bigger'n a bullmoose, I can't rattle with you no more. But say, I'll run ye a race. I can beat ye an' carry the satchel, too."

We ran pell-mell up the lane to the steps like a pair of children.

Aunt Deel did not speak. She just put her arms around me and laid her dear old head upon my breast. Uncle Peabody turned away. Then what a silence! Off in the edge of the wood-land I heard the fairy flute of a wood-thrush.

"Purvis, you drive that load on the floor an' put up the horses," Uncle Peabody shouted in a moment. "If you don't like it you can hire 'nother man. I won't do no more till after dinner. This slave business is played out."

"All right," Purvis answered.

"You bet it's all right, I'm for abolition an' I've stood your dominion'n, nigger-driver ways long enough fer one mornin'. If you don't like it you can look for another man."

Aunt Deel and I began to laugh at this good-natured, make-believe scolding of Uncle Peabody and the emotional strain was over. They led me into the house, where a delightful surprise awaited me, for the rooms had been decorated with balsam bunches and sweet ferns. A glowing mass of violets, framed in moss, occupied the center of the table. The house was filled with the odors of the forest, which, as they knew, were dear to me. I had written that they might expect me some time before noon, but I begged them not to meet me in Canton, as I wished to walk home after my long ride. So they were ready for me.

I remember how they felt the cloth

way of taking care of some people, my boy. Do you remember when I began to call you my boy—you were very little. It is long, long ago since I first saw you in your father's dooryard—you said you were going to mill on a butterfly's back. You looked just as I thought my boy would look. You gave me a kiss. What a wonderful gift it was to me then! I began to love you. I have no one else to think of now. I hope you won't mind my thinking so much of you.

"God bless you," "KATE FULLERTON."

I understood now why the strong will and singular insight of this woman had so often exercised themselves in my behalf. I could not remember the far day and the happy circumstance of which she spoke, but I wrote her a letter which must have warmed her heart I am sure.

Silas Wright arrived in Canton and drove up to our home. He reached our door at eight in the morning with his hound and rifle. He had aged rapidly since I had seen him last. His hair was almost white. There were many new lines in his face. He seemed more grave and dignified. He did not lapse into the dialect of his fathers when he spoke of the ancient pastimes of hunting and fishing as he had been wont to do.

"Bart," he said when the greetings were over, "let's you and me go and spend a day in the woods. I'll leave my man here to help your uncle while you're gone."

We went by driving south a few miles and tramping in to the foot of the stillwater on our river—a trail long familiar to me. The dog left us soon after we took it and began to range over thick wooded hills. We sat down among small, spirally spruces at the river's edge with a long stretch of water in sight while the music of the hound's voice came faintly to our ears from the distant forest.

"Oh, I've been dreaming of this for a long time," said the senator as he leaned back against a tree and filled his lungs and looked out upon the water, green with lily pads along the edge and flecked with the last of the white blossoms. "I believe you want to leave this lovely country."

"I am waiting for the call to go," I said.

"Well, I'm inclined to think you are the kind of man who ought to go," he answered almost sadly. "You are needed. I have been waiting until we should meet to congratulate you on your behavior at Cobleskill. I think you have the right spirit—that is the all-important matter. You will encounter strange company in the game of politics. Let me tell you a story."

He told me many stories of his life in Washington, interrupted by a sound like that of approaching footsteps. We ceased talking and presently a flock of partridges came near us, pacing along over the mat of leaves in a leisurely fashion. We sat perfectly still. A young cock bird with his beautiful ruff standing out, like the hair on the back of a frightened dog, strode toward us with a comic threat in his manner. It seemed as if he were of half a mind to knock us into the river. But we sat as still as stumps and he spared us and went on with the others.

The baying of the hound was nearer now. Suddenly we saw a big buck come down to the shore of the cove near us and on our side of the stream. He looked to right and left. Then he made a long leap into the water and waded slowly until it covered him. He raised his nose and laid his antlers back over his shoulders and swam quietly downstream, his nose just showing above the water. His antlers were like a bit of driftwood. If we had not seen him take the water his antlers might easily have passed for a bunch of dead sticks. The buck slowly lifted his head and turned his neck and looked at both shores. Then very deliberately he resumed his place under water and went on. We watched him as he took the farther shore below us and made off in the woods again.

"I couldn't shoot at him, it was such a beautiful bit of politics," said the senator.

Soon the hound reached the cove's edge and swam the river and ranged up and down the bank for half an hour before he found the buck's trail again.

"I've seen many a rascal, driven to water by the hounds, go swimming away as slyly as that buck, with their horns in the air, looking as innocent as a bit of driftwood. They come in from both shores—the Whig and the Democratic—and they are always shot at from one bank or the other."

I remember it surprised me a little to hear him say that they came in from both shores.

"Just what do you want to do?" he asked presently.

"I should like to go down to Washington with you and help you in any way that I can."

"All right, partner—we'll try it," he answered gravely. "I hope that I don't forget and work you as hard as I work myself. It wouldn't be decent. I have a great many letters to write. I'll try thinking out loud while you take them down in sound-hand. Then you can draft them neatly and I'll sign them. You have tact and good manners and can do many of my errands for me and save me from those who have no good reason for taking up my time."

"You will meet the best people and the worst. There's just a chance that it may come to something worth while—who knows? You are young yet. It will be good training and you will witness the making of some history now and then."

What station I felt!

Again the voice of the hound, which had been ringing in the distant hills, was coming nearer.

"We must keep watch—another deer is coming," said the senator.

We had only a moment's watch before a fine yearling buck came down to the opposite shore and stood looking across the river. The senator raised his rifle and fired. The buck fell in the edge of the water.

"How shall we get him?" my friend asked.

"It will not be difficult," I answered as I began to undress. Nothing was difficult those days.

I swam the river and towed the buck across with a beech with in his gambrel joints. The hound joined me before I was half across with my burden and nosed the carcass and swam on ahead yelping with delight.

We dressed the deer and then I had the great joy of carrying him on my back two miles across the country to the wagon. The senator wished to send a guide for the deer, but I insisted that the carrying was my privilege.

"Well, I guess your big thighs and broad shoulders can stand it," said he.

"My uncle has always said that no man could be called a hunter until he can go into the woods without a guide and kill a deer and bring it out on his back. I want to be able to testify that I am at least partly qualified."

"Your uncle didn't say anything about fetching the deer across a deep river without a boat, did he?" Mr. Wright asked me with a smile.

Leaves of the beeches, maples and basswoods—yellowed by frost—hung like tiny lanterns, glowing with noonday light, above the dim forest aisle which we traveled.

The sun was down when we got to the clearing.

"What a day it has been!" said Mr. Wright when we were seated in the wagon.

"One of the best in my life," I answered with a joy in my heart like that of which I have rarely known in these many years that have come to me.

We rode on in silence with the calls of the swamp robin and the hermit thrush ringing in our ears as the night fell.

"It's a good time to think, and there we take different roads," said my friend. "You will turn into the future and I into the past."

"I've been thinking about your uncle," he said by and by. "He is one of the greatest men I have ever known. You know of that foolish gossip about him—didn't you?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Well, now he's gone about his business the same as ever and showed by his life that it couldn't be true. Not a word out of him! But Dave Ramsey fell sick—down on the flat last winter. By and by his children were crying for bread and the poormaster was going to take charge of them. Well, who should turn-up there, just in the nick of time, but Della and Peabody and Baynes. They fed those children all winter and kept them in clothes so that they could go to school. The strange thing about it is this: It was Dave Ramsey who really started that story. He got up in church the other night and confessed his crime. His conscience wouldn't let him keep it. He said that he had not seen Peabody Baynes on that road the day the money was lost but had only heard that he was there. He knew now that he couldn't have been there. Gosh a'mighty! your uncle used to say when there was nothing else to be said."

It touched me to the soul—this long-delayed vindication of my beloved Uncle Peabody.

The senator ate supper with us and sent his hired man out for his horse and buggy. When he had put on his overcoat and was about to go he turned to my uncle and said:

"Peabody Baynes, if I have had any success in the world it is because I have had the exalted honor and consciousness that I represented men like you."

He left us and we sat down by the glowing candles. Soon I told them what Ramsey had done. There was a moment of silence. Uncle Peabody rose and went to the water pail for a drink.

"Bart, I believe I'll plant corn on that ten-acre lot next spring—darned if I don't," he said as he returned to his chair.

None of us ever spoke of the matter again, to my knowledge.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the Summit.

My mental assets would give me a poor rating. I presume, in the commerce of modern scholarship when I went to Washington that autumn with Senator and Mrs. Wright. Still it was no smattering that I had, but rather a few broad areas of knowledge which were firmly in my possession. My best asset was not mental but spiritual, if I may be allowed to say it. In all modesty, for therein I claim no special advantage, saving, possibly, an unusual strength of character in my aunt and uncle. Those days the candles were lighting the best trails of knowledge all over the land. Never has the general spirit of this republic been so high and admirable as then and a little later. It was to speak, presently, in the immortal voices of Whittier, Emerson, Whitman, Greeley and Lincoln. The dim glow of the candles had entered their souls and out of them came a light that filled the land and was seen of all men.

The railroads on which we traveled from Utica, the great cities through which we passed, were a wonder and an inspiration to me. I was awed by the grandeur of Washington itself. I took lodgings with the senator and his wife.

"Now, Bart," said he, when we had arrived, "I'm going to turn you loose here for a little while before I put bar-

ness on you. Go about for a week or so and get the lay of the land and the feel of it. Mrs. Wright will be your guide until the general situation has worked its way into your consciousness."

It seemed to me that there was not room enough in my consciousness for the great public buildings and the pictures and the statues and the vast machinery of the government. Beauty and magnitude have a wonderful effect when they spring fresh upon the vision of a youth out of the back country. I sang of the look of them in my letters and soon I began to think about them and imperfectly to understand them. They had their epic, lyric and dramatic stages in my consciousness.

One afternoon we went to hear Senator Wright speak. He was to answer Calhoun on a detail of the banking laws. The floor and galleries were filled. With what emotion I saw him rise and begin his argument as all ears bent to hear him! He aimed not at popular sentiments in highly finished rhetoric, as did Webster, to be quoted in the school books and repeated on every platform. But no words of mine—and I have used many in the effort—are able to convey a notion of the masterful ease and charm of his manner on the floor of the senate or of the singular modesty, courtesy, aptness and simplicity of his words as they fell from his lips. There were the thunderous Webster, the grandeur of whose sentences no American has equaled; the agile-minded Clay, whose voice was like a silver clarion; the far-sewing, fiery Calhoun, of "the swift sword"—most formidable in debate—but I was soon to learn that neither nor all of these men—gifted of heaven so highly—could cope with the suave, incisive, conversational sentences of Wright, going straight to the heart of the subject and laying it bare to his hearers. That was what people were saying as we left the senate chamber, late in the evening; that, indeed, was what they were always saying after they had heard him answer an adversary.

He had a priceless and unusual talent for avoiding school-reader English and the arts of declamation and for preparing a difficult subject to enter the average brain. The underlying secret of his power was soon apparent to me. He stood always for that great thing in America which, since then, Whitman has called "the divine aggregate" and seeing clearly how every measure would be likely to affect its welfare, he followed the compass. It had led him to a height of power above all others and was to lead him into the loneliest summit of accomplishment in American history.

Not much in my term of service there is important to this little task of mine. I did my work well, if I may believe the senator, and grew familiar with the gentle and ungentle arts of the politician.

One great fact grew in magnitude and sullen portent as the months passed: the gigantic slave-holding interests of the South viewed with growing alarm the spread of abolition sentiment. Subtly, quietly and naturally they were feeling for the means to defend and increase their power. Straws were coming to the surface in that session which betrayed this deep undercurrent of purpose. We felt it and the senator was worried, I knew, but held his peace. He knew how to keep his opinions until the hour had struck that summoned them to service. The senator never played with his lance. By and by Spencer openly sounded the note of conflict.

The most welcome year of my life dawned on the first of January, 1844. I remember that I arose before daylight that morning and dressed and went out on the street to welcome it.

I had less than six months to wait for that day appointed by Sally. I had no doubt that she would be true to me. I had had my days of fear and depression, but always my sublime faith in her came back in good time.

Oh, yes, indeed, Washington was a fair of beauty and gallantry those days. I saw it all. I have spent many years in the capital, and I tell you the girls of that time had manners and knew how to wear their clothes, but again the magic of old memories kept my lady on her throne. There was one of them—just one of those others who, I sometimes thought, was almost as graceful and charming and noble-hearted as Sally, and she liked me. I know, but the ideal of my youth glowed in the light of the early morning, so to speak, and was brighter than all others. Above all, I had given my word to Sally, and—well, you know, the old-time Yankee of good stock was fairly steadfast, whatever else may be said of him—often a little too steadfast, as were Ben Grisham and Squire Fullerton.

The senator and I went calling that New Year's day. We saw all the great people and some of them were more cheerful than they had a right to be. It was a weakness of the time. I shall not go into details for fear of wandering too far from my main road. Let me step aside a moment to say, however, that there were two clouds in the sky of the Washington society of those days. One was strong drink and the other was the crude, rough-coated, aggressive democrat from the frontiers of the West. These latter were often seen in the holiday regalia of farm or village at fashionable functions. Some of them changed slowly, and by and by reached the stage of white linen and diamond breastpins and waistcoats of figured silk. It must be said, however, that their motives were always above their taste.

The winter wore away slowly in hard work. Mr. Van Buren came down to see the senator one day from his country seat on the Hudson. The ex-president had been solicited to accept

(Continued tomorrow)

Here At Last!

On account of the big demand we have had for Boy's shoes, we have been trying to secure a good line, and that line is Buck-Hecht shoes—a shoe that is made on the Munson last, an army product, and is one of the best shoes you can buy for Boys. These shoes are made under the Good-year welt process and is as smooth inside as any High Grade shoe. No nails or composition insoles, nothing but solid leather throughout.

Don't buy shoes for Boys before you see this shoe.

We have the genuine Buck-Hecht Army shoes and selling at \$6.90 and \$5.95.

LOGGERS

We have one of the best logger's shoes on the market, which is the only shoe made today from genuine kip leather. This is the well known "Forester Shoe", that is galvanized to be absolutely waterproof, to hold calks and wear like iron—or money refunded—other words no better shoe on the market, we carry them on both regular and spring heels. Come and see them before you buy.

PARIS SHOES WEAR BETTER

HOME OF QUALITY

Two Seattle Contract Shops Agree To New Wages

Seattle, Wash., Jan. 20.—Two Seattle contract shops have already signed an agreement to pay the new wage scale demanded by the metal trades union, for shipyard workers. The scale ranges from \$4 to \$8 a day and covers all classes from common laborers to skilled mechanics.

Metal trade officials declare that from three to six employers will "line up" with the union in order to prevent the walkout of 25,000 shipyard workers at 10 o'clock tomorrow.

David Rodgers, general manager of the Skinner and Eddy shipbuilding corporation said today:

"Until the men strike we can say nothing. We are still in the hands of the government. We have made every effort but labor leaders are arrogant and unreasonable."

LIFT OFF CORNS!

Doesn't Hurt A Bit! Sore Corns Lift Right Off With Fingers. Magic!

Costs few cents! Drop a little Frezzone on that touchy corn, instantly that corn stops hurting, then you lift it right off with the fingers.

Why wait? Your druggist gets a tiny bottle of Frezzone for a few cents, sufficient to rid your feet of every hard corn, soft corn, or corn between the toes, and calluses, without soreness or irritation. Frezzone is the much talked of discovery of the Cincinnati genius.

DEMobilIZATION SPEEDY

Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 21.—The work of demobilization of the 13th division at Camp Lewis is proceeding with all speed today and it is expected 500 men a day will be discharged from now on. Orders from Washington have been received to demobilize the entire division, involving about 10,000 men and including all units except the quartermaster department, the base hospitals, remount depot, camp provost guards, ordnance department and such other utility units concerned in the up-keep of the camp.

The division headquarters and the brigade headquarters will continue to function after the demobilization is completed or until further orders from the war department.

HAS REAL THEORY.

Washington Jan. 21.—A Red Cross worker who is still overseas serving with a certain well known division in France which has seen hard fighting, claims he has the prize memo, which is a small dog-eared book.

When the book was blank it was placed by this Red Cross man on the counter of a Red Cross outpost near the fighting line. Soldiers and officers called for tobacco, cigarettes, chocolate or comfort bags and other commodities,

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Mr. Business Man

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