

LITTLE WATTS.

By Frank H. Sweet.

NO matter how cold or stormy it was Little Watts was always waiting for his papers in front of the Daily Leader office at half past 4 in the morning. It was often stormy and always cold at that hour in the thriving and populous Rocky mountain mining town in which the Leader was published, and Little Watts lived a mile from the office in a poor wooden house near one of the great mines.

I met him one morning hurrying down the stony, deserted, unlighted street. The wind was blowing keen and cold, the air was filled with fine, sleety snowflakes, and I thought when I saw Little Watts that the fates had not been kind to the boy or he would have been warm and snug in bed at home at that hour.

But the Leader was published every morning, and Little Watts had regular customers at whose doors he left his papers before he hurried away to the early morning trains.

He was only twelve years old and small for his years, and he would never be much larger or stronger. A great hump between his narrow shoulders told a sorrowful story of a fall down a long flight of tenement house stairs when he was only two years old.

It was often my duty to count out to the boys the papers as they came from the press. That is how I happened to know Little Watts.

His name was Clarence, but I never heard him called by any other name than Little Watts.

I remember when I saw the boy and heard his name for the first time. It was the first morning I gave the papers out to the boys. The Leader that morning contained one of the matters of important news that always increase the demand for the papers, and the moment the office door was opened the newsboys came pushing and scrambling in, each eager to be first.

Suddenly the largest of the boys, a bow-browed, thick-lipped, stocky fellow, began to beat the other boys back. "Git back, fellers!" he shouted. "Git back, I tell ye! Ye're scroogin' the life out o' Little Watts! Ye know he allus gits his papers fust! Git back, now!"

The other boys fell back, and out from among them came Little Watts, bearing evidence of having been pretty severely "scrooged."

His hat had fallen off, and he limped as he struggled forward. The rough boy who had befriended him in a way so surprising to me found his hat and put it on the boy's head, while he said: "Ain't hurt, are ye, Watsy? No? Well, that's good. Git yer papers now and light out, for they'll go like hot cakes this mornin'."

There stood next to the house in which I boarded a small house containing two or three rooms, which had not been occupied for several weeks.

One evening as I went home I saw cheap paper shades at the windows of this little tenement. Smoke was rising from the chimney, and on the step of the open door sat Little Watts playing on a harmonicon.

The door was within three feet of the street, and I stopped to say: "How do you do, Little Watts? Are you going to live here?"

"Yes, sir." "Then we shall be neighbors. I live next door."

"I'm glad of it, sir," said Little Watts politely.

"You must come in and see me some time," I said. "I have a good many books, and you may use any that you like to read."

A small, thin faced woman came to the door and looked inquiringly from me to Little Watts.

He rose and said: "Mother, this is Mr. Hart of the Leader. You've heard me speak about him."

"So I have," said Mrs. Watts quickly. "The Leader folks are real good to my boy, sir. He tells me about it, and I'm very much obliged."

The window of my room looked out upon the house which the Watts family occupied. A day or two after their arrival I was sitting in my open window. The windows of the other house were also open, and through them came the sound of some one singing in a wondrously clear and sweet voice. I laid down my book to listen. The words came distinct and beautiful:

"Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes—

"GIT BACK, I TELL YE!"

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books, and you may use any that you like to read."

Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise."

Could it be Little Watts singing in such a voice? While I looked and listened I saw Little Watts coming from a well at the back of the house with a pail of water.

I could not restrain my curiosity. As he came near my window I asked, "Who is that singing?"

"My sister Elise," he answered eagerly, his face beaming.

"She has a wonderful voice," I said. "Hasn't she, though?" exclaimed Little Watts, with more enthusiasm than I had ever before seen in him.

"Did you ever hear any of those big singers?" he went on.

"Yes." "Can they sing any better than she can?"

"Well, they are much older than your sister, and of course they are highly trained. How old is your sister?"

"Sixteen."

Before many days I and others in our neighborhood sat in the scantily furnished living room of Mrs. Watts' house and heard Elise sing.

Mrs. Watts was a widow, and Elise and Clarence were her only children. A small pension partly supported their wants, and Mrs. Watts and Elise took in plain sewing when they could get it, but Little Watts' earnings from the sale of his papers were their chief source of income.

It seemed to me that they might live a little more comfortably, but one day Little Watts confided a secret to me.

"We're saving for Elise," he said. "She's going to be a big singer some day after she's gone away and studied and had a chance. I'm saving up for that."

This was the reason why Little Watts wore such shabby clothes, and this was why their home was so poor and bare and their table so scantily supplied. This was why Little Watts walked the streets in all kinds of weather, crying his papers at an hour when other boys slept.

One, two years passed. I was still in the Leader office. Little Watts still came before daylight for his papers and was called Little Watts still, for he was not noticeably larger or stronger than when I saw him first. He still lived next door to my own home, and Elise was going away.

She had been singing in church choirs and at concerts, and some ladies who had become interested in her, but who were unable to lend her money for her study, had given her a benefit concert, which the Leader had widely advertised without charge on account of Little Watts.

But most of the money that was to pay for Elise's two years of study in the east had been or would be earned by Little Watts.

"But when I come back he shall work no more," Elise said to me, with the tears in her eyes. "I shall earn it then, and he shall go to New York to study drawing and engraving. He's so eager to learn it, you know, but he won't say much about it or even think about it until I begin to earn money."

Quite a little company of us went to the station to see Elise off. Of course Little Watts was there. His large eyes were shining through their tears, and his white face was wreathed in smiles, though I knew his heart ached with sorrow at the thought of two years without her.

But the boy cried his papers just as loudly and cheerily as ever next day—the Leader in the morning, when day was breaking, and the Times at night, when the day was gone.

I often met him hurrying around the corners of almost deserted streets or paying a last visit to the hotels, where he hoped to sell another paper at an hour when all other newsboys had gone home.

Every paper he sold counted, not for himself, but for Elise. He and his mother lived upon the pension and her sewing.

Every month a draft to the amount of all of Little Watts' earnings went to New York to Elise, and every week she wrote encouraging letters of what her teachers said about her voice and of her hopes for the future.

"I knew they'd have to say her voice wasn't anything common," Little Watts said proudly to me when the first of her letters came. "I knew she'd astonish 'em!"

Twice the mountains changed from green to white and from white to green. They were changing to white again when Elise wrote the letter that told when she would start for home.

Little Watts brought me the letter to read.

"I shall reach home about the last day of October," she wrote. "You need not send me any more money. I am afraid you have sent me too much now. It is time for me to begin paying it back to you. You must be here next year and I at home working and earning money for you. If I'm not too tired, I shall sing for you and mother the very night I come. I'm so anxious to show you how well your money has been spent!"

She was delayed a little and came on the third day of November. It was on the afternoon of the first day of that month that the man whose duty it now was to give out the papers said to me: "Little Watts didn't show up for his papers this morning. It's the first morning he's failed to come since I've been here. I wonder if he's sick?"

"Not that I know of," I replied. "It was a terribly stormy morning, you know."

"The weather has never made any difference with him before. He's been on hand the first one many a morning worse than this. Poor little chap! How he's escaped pneumonia as long as he has is a wonder to me."

The sun had not shone for three days. First rain and then snow had fallen nearly all the time. A fierce cold wind had swept down from the mountains. The barren town had never seemed so gloomy and cheerless and desolate to me as it did now.

At noon I went to see Little Watts. His mother came to the door and said briefly and in a low tone, for Little Watts was in the next room and the door was open:

"He's real sick. The doctor is afraid it's going to be pneumonia. I've tried to keep him in the last three days, but he would go out. You see why."

Her eyes were full of tears as she pointed toward the corner of the room. There stood a shining upright piano, with a stool of crimson velvet before it.

"He made the first payment on them yesterday," Mrs. Watts said. "He was so anxious to have them here for Elise."

"Well, he's a perfect little hero, Mrs. Watts," I said under my breath, but heartily. "I believe he will be able to fight off even the pneumonia for the sake of Elise."

He was worse the next day. "He'll never be any better," said the doctor in the afternoon when I met him coming out of the shabby little house.

In the evening Little Watts said in a whisper:

"She'll be here in the morning, won't she?"

"At 8 o'clock," I said.

"Then I'll hear her sing again," he answered.

The wind died away in the night. The skies cleared. All of the distant ranges, the nearer hills and the streets of the town were white with snow when the sun came out the next morning.

Elise came at 8 o'clock. Little Watts pulled himself up on his pillows to meet her and welcome her.

There was no sign in his eyes or face of sorrow in his heart at this ending of all his own hopes and plans for the future. He met Elise with a smile and with tearful eyes. For a moment she thought it must all have been a mistake about his being so ill.

"Now go and sing for me," he said after a few minutes.

They rolled his bed to the door that he might see her at the new piano. Elise sat before it with streaming eyes and sang the little ballads and the old songs he had loved so well.

"There was one," he whispered, "about the shining shore' and 'my Father hath many mansions.' Won't you sing that, Elise?"

She sang it with trembling voice, and while she was singing Little Watts looked up with wide open eyes as if he were gazing at something wonderful that he could not see and then sank back, his eyes closed forever.

A Long Background.

First Nurse (at hospital)—That ballet dancer in the ward with delirium tremens must be frightfully old.

Second Nurse—Why?

First Nurse—She sees nothing but prehistoric animals.—Harper's Weekly.

High Stakes.

Stella—An exciting bridge game? Bella—Very; we played for each other's coons.—Harper's Bazar.

Human deeds and human lives are never understood until they are finished. You can no more tell in advance how manhood will turn out than how a young child will grow up.

Bathing a Prince.

George IV. while prince and residing in his Brighton palace kept in his bedroom a portrait of Mrs. Gunn, an old bathing woman who used to dip him into the sea when he was the little Prince of Wales. A picture book much prized by children showed the old lady bathing the little fellow. Beneath the picture was this stanza:

To Brighton came he,
Came George the Third's son,
To be dipped in the sea
By the famed Martha Gunn.

A companion portrait to Martha Gunn was that of Thomas Smoaker, who had charge of the horse which drew the bathing machines into and out of the sea. One day the little royal highness, having learned to swim, swam out farther than Thomas judged to be safe. He called to him to come back, but the self-willed boy struck out with more vigor. Thomas went after the prince, overtook him, seized him by an ear and drew him to shore.

"Do you think," he replied to the boy's angry words, "I'm a-going to get myself hanged for letting the king's heir drown himself just to please a youngster like you?"

Only a Dodge.

An insurance expert was relating in Chicago some oddities of insurance.

"And then," said the expert, "there was that case of the general store man in Ohio. This man's store burned down, and, because his stock was so heavy, the company disputed his claim. I remember one item in his stock list—17,500 mourning hatbands. When I came to this item I thumped it with my pencil and said to the storekeeper severely:

"Look here, this is unreasonable. Why should you have had 17,500 mourning hatbands in stock? What possibility was there that death would create in a single small shop like yours a demand for 17,500 mourning hatbands?"

"The storekeeper smiled at me in a condescending way and replied: 'I didn't keep those hatbands for men who grieved for the death of relatives or friends, but for men who went into mourning for the grease on their hats.'—Boston Globe.

Misfires of Young Idea.

A usually has no weight, but when placed in a barometer it is found to weigh about fifteen pounds a square inch.

If a small hole were bored in the top of a barometer tube, the mercury would shoot up in a column thirty feet high.

A right angle is 90 degrees F.

Hydrogen is colorless, odorless and insolvent.

A cuckoo is a thing that turns from a butterfly into a moth.

Horsepower is the distance a horse can carry one pound of water in an hour.

The earth revolves on its own axis 365 times in twenty-four hours. This rapid motion through space causes its sides to perspire, forming dew.—University Correspondent.

Senate and Lords.

The British house of lords is a survival of the ancient aristocracy of the kingdom, which for a long time was supreme in all national matters. When the democratic sentiment won a place for itself in the shape of the house of commons the natural and apparently indestructible conservatism of the British people held on to the house of lords as a check upon the commons and a perpetual reminder of the ancient institution. The senate of the United States was the result of the compromise struck between the Nationalists and States' Rights parties in the convention that formed the constitution. Some were for merging the representatives in a single body, while others insisted upon the second chamber (the senate) as a recognition of the political equality of the states.

Lacked Something.

"You Germans have no sense of humor," said an American.

"Try me and see," said the German.

"Well," said the American, "you know America is the home of very large things—the highest mountains, the greatest waterfalls—"

"Oh, yes, yes, yes," said the German.

"And our trees," continued the American, "are so tall that in order to see to the top of them one man looks as far up as he can, and another man begins where the first man leaves off and looks up to the top."

"But dat vass no joke; dat vass a lie."

A Boston Correction.

Bilkins had recently moved from New York to Boston. The other morning he went to the butcher's.

"Give me a nice porterhouse," he ordered.

"Extremely sorry, sir," said the proprietor of the establishment urbanely, "but we are not giving anything away this morning."—Harper's Weekly.

The Truth.

Fear is not in the habit of speaking truth. When perfect sincerity is expected, perfect wisdom must be allowed. Nor has any one who is apt to be angry when he hears the truth any cause to wonder that he does not hear it.—Tacitus.

Too Healthy.

"Do you believe that mosquitoes carry malaria?"

"Not the mosquitoes around here," answered Farmer Cornstossel. "They couldn't possibly do it and be so healthy."—Washington Star.

Persistency is the road to success. The only known exception to this rule is the case of a hen sitting on a china egg.—Exchange.

To the Voters of Centre County.

FELLOW CITIZENS;

At a mass meeting in the court house in this place on February 6th, last the undersigned were chosen as a committee to conduct a canvass and do whatever seemed fair and reasonable to do, to secure the nomination of candidates for the Legislature, who if elected, would support and vote for a Local Option Bill at the Legislative session of 1909. The good people of the state were greatly disappointed that the Legislature of 1907 smothered such a bill in committee, and by this means took from them the right to pass on this question.

During the campaign it has been frequently declared by interested parties that this is prohibition. This is a misstatement of the fact and known to be so by those who make it. When made by candidates it is done to carry favor with those who are opposed to the passage of a Local Option Bill and the submission of the question of license or no license to the people.

The proposition to submit such a question to the people is so preeminently fair that it is amazing that even those who favor license should oppose it.

"It is not the right of a free people to have, by Legislative enactment, provisions made for the use of the ballot to give expression of opinion upon a question of such vital moment. To deny it would be a disgrace and should ever be the perpetrator of such tyranny with ODIUM AND INFAMY."

On the 14th of March the committee sent to each person who had announced himself to be voted for at the primaries as a candidate for the Legislature the following letter:

Bellefonte, Pa., March 14th, 1908.

DEAR SIR:—At a meeting of the undersigned the following preamble and resolution was adopted. You are respectfully requested to give us assurance within a week from getting the same, as to your position.

WHEREAS in view of the fact that the Local Option question will be one of the most important that can or will come before the next session of the Legislature of Pennsylvania.

AND WHEREAS you have announced yourself as a candidate for representative from Centre county in the next Legislature therefore,

RESOLVED that the Local Option committee respectfully request you to define your position on the Local Option question and if you should be nominated and elected whether you will use all honorable means both by work and vote to secure the passage of such a measure.

This preamble and resolution is submitted to all candidates for the Legislature of both the great political parties. This committee is not a political committee. It is our desire only to ascertain the position of the candidates so that the voters of both parties may be advised as to who they can rely upon to properly represent them fairly and honestly on this great question.

Very truly yours,
D. F. FORTNEY, Chairman.

ISAAC UNDERWOOD, Secy.
JAMES HARRIS, Treas.

To this time the only replies received have been from J. C. Meyer, Esq., W. L. Foster, Charles E. Fisher, and R. M. Foster as follows:

Bellefonte, Pa., March 16th, 1908.
D. F. FORTNEY,
Pres. Centre county Local Option Com.
Bellefonte Penna.

MY DEAR SIR:—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, requesting that as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Assembly, I state my position on the enactment of a proposed Local Option Law.

I now hereby cheerfully comply with your request, because I do not desire the support and confidence of the people of our county without being entire frank and honest with them upon this issue, so that they may be able to vote intelligently.

I am convinced that the question you refer to will be an important and well defined issue in the approaching campaign. I may go a step further and say, that while the liquor traffic has always been and always will be a great moral issue in the public mind and conscience, it is beginning latterly to assume the phase of a great commercial problem. Recently large corporations employing much labor have declared an advanced code of conduct for their employees and now require of them absolute sobriety as a condition of service.

Because therefore the right to sell intoxicating liquors as a beverage affects the general welfare of the community, I believe the people should have a voice in the determination of the question, and I do not want anyone to be in doubt as to where I stand on that question. Let me say, therefore, that if I should be selected as the proper person to represent Centre county in the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, I shall use all honorable means to secure the enactment of a LOCAL OPTION LAW and shall vote for its prompt and speedy passage.

Sincerely yours,
J. C. MEYER.

State College, Pa., March 23rd, 1908.
D. F. Fortney,
Chairman.

DEAR SIR:—Your communication to my position on Local Option received. In reply would say; that the local option question is not a direct issue in the campaign. That must be settled by the people later or should the Legislature give them the privilege to vote on this issue.

But should I be nominated and elected to the Legislature I would support any lawful measure to submit the question of Local Option to the vote of the people, and would endeavor to support any measure that the expressed wishes of my constituents desired in the matter.

To pledge myself to any particular measure for the purpose of securing votes I feel would be improper and not in accordance with our constitution and laws.

Yours very truly,
W. L. FOSTER.

Boalsburg, March 24th, 1908.
D. F. Fortney Esq.

Chairman of Centre County Local Option Com. Bellefonte, Pa.

DEAR SIR:—Having announced myself as a candidate for Legislature, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the primary election, on April 11th, next, I wish to state at this time, that if nominated and elected, I will determinedly oppose any movement standing in the way of the enactment of such a law as will give the people of Centre county the right to say by their votes, whether or not they are in favor of Local Option.

Very truly yours,
CHAS. E. FISHER.

State College, Pa., March 28th, 1908.
D. F. Fortney, Esq.
Chairman of Centre County Local Option Com. Bellefonte, Pa.

GENTLEMEN:—Yours of recent date before me. In reply will say that if nominated and elected to the Legislature I shall be pleased to aid and support a Local Option measure.

When a member of the Legislature I never supported liquor legislation, hoping this defines my position I remain,
Yours truly,
R. M. FOSTER.

None of the other candidates have submitted an answer, and the time limit given by the committee in which a reply was requested is more than past, so we conclude no other answers will be given. Mr. W. H. Evey announces himself subject to the actions of the Republicans of Centre county as follows:

"If elected I will favor any measure giving to the people the constitutional right of expression on any fundamental question, especially such as may be advocated by the Anti-Saloon League."

The committee herewith submit all replies received and append the announcement of Mr. Evey which he believes sufficient, for your consideration. The men who have given their assent as to what they will do are all known to you. By their characters in the light of their past lives you will know whom to choose. The committee has endeavored to act fairly with all candidates and has given each an opportunity to answer.

No candidate should be afraid to trust the people or desire to take from them the burden to choose as their preference dictates. We have given you what we have obtained from the candidates of each party. It is to be regretted that only three candidates among all the number announced as candidates for the Legislature, have had the moral courage to define their position on a question of such importance and one so fraught with good to the people.

We have called to your attention the declarations made by the assemblies and conferences of the various churches on this great question. There are thousands of members and adherents of these same churches in Centre county. Are you ready and will you follow the lead of the church to which you adhere in this conflict which makes for civic decency, purity in social life and righteousness in the world? Hoping that you appreciate the magnitude of this contest and that you will register your convictions at the primaries on the 11th of April, 1908, we are very truly,

D. F. FORTNEY,
Pres. of the Committee.

CLEMENT DALE, Vice-Pres.
ISAAC UNDERWOOD, Secy's.
JARED HARPER,
JAMES HARRIS, Treas.

A Valuable Cent.

Many a person looking over small change has come across a white cent bearing a flying eagle on the obverse and as once jumped to the conclusion that it is one of the rare pieces, only to be disappointed when told that the flying eagle cent dated 1857 or 1858, have no value above that of the ordinary cent.

Hundredts of 1856 cents are in existence, and there may be thousands. One writer on coins some years ago stated his belief that fully 15,000 of these pieces had been struck. Yet the premium brought for a proof specimen of this cent at any of the auction sales held in recent years has rarely fallen below \$15, and there is a record price of \$16 given for a fine specimen.

One collector who resided at Atlantic City had 109 pieces of this design and date.

The 1856 cent owes its origin to the fact that about 1855 a change was desired from the cumbersome and heavy copper cent which had been issued yearly, with the exception of 1815, since the opening of the first United States mint in 1793. It was also intended at the same time to abandon the half-cent piece.

The mint engraver fixed upon the pattern of the flying eagle which had been previously used on United States coins, especially the silver dollars of 1836 and 1838. In order that Congress might see what the new coin looked like, specimens are said to have been presented to various representatives, and it is also supposed that to demonstrate to the coinage committee just how the design appeared in various base metal alloys the cents were struck in copper, copper-nickel and nickel.

The regularly adopted eagle cent of 1857 and 1858 showed on the obverse the eagle flying to the left, surrounded by the inscription, "United States of America," with the date 1857 or 1858 below. On the reverse was a wreath made up of corn, tobacco and cotton, in which were inclosed the words "One Cent."

This is just about the same design as that of the copper-nickel cent of 1856, the only variation being in the date. The 1856 coin is valued at from \$8 to \$16, according to its condition.

The weight of the flying eagle cent was 72 grains, a material reduction from that of the large copper cent, which was authorized to weigh 168 grains. Even this was later reduced, for in 1864 Congress ordered the metal to be changed from copper-nickel to bronze and the weight still further reduced to 48 grains. The metal was authorized to consist of 96 per cent of copper and 5 per cent tin and zinc, and this style of cent is in use at the present time.

Washington Correspondent Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

It was a Stage Brand.

Gertrude, aged four, had been to the matinee. Later she tried to describe the play to a grown-up friend.