



CHAPTER I.

The train stopped at Sidington just long enough to have a trunk thrown off and allow one passenger to alight. The trunk was mine, the passenger myself. Then the train went on again, the engine puffing and hissing in a vain attempt to acquire suddenly the greatest speed, seemingly in great impatience that it had been compelled to stop at all—which was not to be wondered at; for, when I gazed around, from what I could see, Sidington was nothing more than a station house, a few miles of railroad, and a wide stretch of hilly country.

There was a young fellow of about my age standing in the doorway of the waiting-room. He was regarding me with evident curiosity. I stepped up to him. "Where is the station agent?" I asked, briefly.

"Why, I'm the agent," the fellow replied, in drawing tones.

"Isn't there any town here, or at least a settlement? Is this—sweeping my arm around in a comprehensive gesture—"is this all there is of Sidington?"

"You kin see about all there is from here," the agent replied, with a grin. Then, to my surprise, he stepped out on the platform, locked the door, and put the key in his pocket.

"Are you going to leave the station?" I inquired.

"Yes. No use stayin' around. There ain't no more trains till three o'clock, when a couple of coals pass. This ain't much of a station."

"But what's to be done about my luggage?" I asked, impatiently, pointing toward a large trunk and several bundles at the upper end of the platform.

The agent looked in the direction I indicated. "Oh, that's all yours, is it? I thought maybe it might be. Got checks, I suppose?"

"Yes, certainly. Here they are." He took the checks, gazed at them doubtfully for a moment, then slowly went to the pile of luggage.

"I guess it's all right," he said, after taking the checks from the various articles of baggage and carefully comparing them with the ones I had given him. "You kin take 'em along."

Now the trunk was large and heavy, and I turned on the fellow with a touch of anger, for at first I thought he was making game of me. But when I saw the expression of stolid indifference on his face, it struck me he was simply dull and stupid.

"Thank you," I finally said. "It is very kind of you to allow me to take my own property. Perhaps you will show further kindness by telling me how I am to take it. The bundles I might possibly manage, but the trunk, as you see, is large, and I can assure you, heavy, and I really should prefer not to carry it, if any other way of removal might be devised."

For a moment it seemed to me the blast of sarcasm produced an effect, for just a shadow of a smile appeared on the agent's face. It lasted but an instant, however, and the blank stare with which he had viewed my belongings took its place.

"Where you want'er go?" he finally asked, in an indifferent manner.

"I would like to go to Nelsonville, if there could be found a way to get my trunk there too," I replied.

"So you're goin' to Nelsonville?" He favored me with a quick, searching glance, which was immediately withdrawn when he caught my eye. "Nelsonville's about three miles from here," he continued. "Tain't much more of a place than Sidington. You ain't goin' to stay there, are you?"

I was about to answer sharply that that was my business, but, remembering the curiosity that the advent of a stranger generally causes in the minds of country folks, I told him my plans were not definite.

"Tain't that I want'er be impertinent," he went on, with a grin; "but I thought if you was only goin' to stay there over night you might leave your trunk in the station."

"Well, I had intended to spend two or three months, possibly longer, in Nelsonville. It depends altogether on how I like it. So, you see, I must have my trunk."

"Two or three months!" He gazed down at the trunk for a moment, and then turned quickly toward me as though an important idea had just come to him.

"There ain't no hotel at Nelsonville. P'raps you didn't know that," he said. "It will make no difference to me. I have made arrangements for accommodation. You see, I am going to occupy a portion of my own property."

"Oh, you own a place there, then?" "Yes, the old Nelson homestead is mine. It descended to me from my grandfather, Abram Nelson. He has been dead 13 years. I have not seen the place since. I was quite a small boy then. And now, as I have plenty of leisure, the desire is natural to revisit the scenes of boyhood days."

The agent listened to my words, and I was considerably amused to note the interest they inspired—an interest, I thought then, due wholly to a country fellow's curiosity.

"If I have told you all you wish to know about myself," I went on, "will

you kindly tell me, as a return favor, where a team can be procured to cart me and my belongings over to my place?"

The fellow grinned at me, as though there had been something in my words of an amusing nature; but finally he did give me the desired information:

"Why, I guess maybe Jake Hunsicker kin take you over. He's just gettin' in the oats, but if you pay him, p'raps he'll leave the oats be long enough to drive to Nelsonville and back. Anyway, he kin take you after supper, if you want'er wait till then."

"And where does Mr. Hunsicker live?" I asked.

The agent pointed to a clump of trees on the summit of a hill about a quarter of a mile distant. "You kin see just a part of the roof through the trees. The road runs uphill right past the house."

"How about these things while I am gone? Will they be safe?" I inquired.

"Oh, yes; no one'll take 'em. It'll be all right," he replied, indifferently, as though he did not care whether my luggage would be secure or not. Then he gave one more glance at me, grinned in his dull way, sprang from the platform, and went off down the road.

All the country for miles about Nelsonville had been familiar to my boyhood. But now, after an absence of 18 years, I could hardly recognize this part of it.

The railroad had been built some five years before, and that made, in itself, a great change. The station was in a valley, and the fertile fields and dark green forests on the bounding hills were all very beautiful.

But, as there were few houses, and those in the distance, there was a loneliness about the place which seemed to find a counterpart in my life. For I was a social Ishmael, an outcast, burdened with the suspicion of a crime of which I was innocent. The fact that nothing could be proved against me, in the minds of most people, only indicated that I was such an adept in roguery as to be able to cover up all proof of my guilt.

It was now a year that the cloud had rested over my good name. The first six months of this time I had vainly attempted to live down the general suspicion. But I found the houses of even those I had considered true friends closed against me, and so, heart-sore and almost despairing, I fled to Europe, hoping to find partial forgetfulness, or at least a rest from cruel tongues. Unfortunately for my peace, Americans read the newspapers, and I had only to mention my name to my countrymen whom I met during my trip abroad to be asked if I was the one whose name was mentioned in connection with the great bank robbery in Philadelphia. I soon tired of this and of being compelled to tell over and over again the circumstances of that affair, so resolved to go back to my native land, avoid the city where I was so well and so unfavorably known, and seek rest and peace amid the scenes of my childhood. I also determined, after my arrival, to begin a thorough investigation of the robbery on my own hook. The reason I had not done this before will be stated later.

The solitude of Sidington, the lack of a welcoming hand, the knowledge that I had outgrown all boyish estimates and would therefore find the old homestead no longer encompassed about by the romantic interest which a youngster's mind was able to conjure up—all this did not tend to raise my depressed spirits, and my heart was heavy within me as I plodded up the long, dusty hill toward the home of Mr. Hunsicker.

A delicious breeze was blowing at the top of the hill, and I paused a moment under the shade of the maples, to bare my perspiring brow to the cool influence.

Then I slowly walked up the shady path leading to the porch, keeping my hat in my hand. I hoped Mr. Hunsicker would be at the house for dinner, for I determined not to go out into the hot fields to search for him.

A knock at the open front door caused an interruption in the clatter of dishes which proceeded from an inner room, and very soon shuffling footsteps approached the door.

A tall, stoop-shouldered individual, dressed in a brown cotton shirt, blue overalls and cowhide boots, loomed up out of the gloom of the darkened rooms. From the look of astonishment on the man's face when he saw me, I judged the advent of a stranger was a rare occurrence to this household.

"Will you haul me and a trunk to Nelsonville?" I asked.

My question produced a blanker stare from the old fellow, and his jaws, which had been busy masticating a mouthful of food, ceased operations. I gave him time, and when he had partially recovered from his surprise, again addressed him.

"Do you understand English?" I asked.

"Ach, y-e-e-s indeed!" he replied, after he had hastily swallowed the food.

"And is your name Hunsicker—Jacob Hunsicker?" I continued.

He nodded a reply.

"The station agent down at the depot said that perhaps I could get you to take me over to Nelsonville. Will you do it?"

"V-ell, bud ve're just at de oats," Mr. Hunsicker said.

"I am willing to wait until after supper, which will not interfere with the harvesting. You will be well paid for your trouble."

Hereupon the rather shrill voice of a woman came from the inner room. She spoke in Pennsylvania Dutch, but I was able to make out that her words conveyed a command for her husband to comply with my request. She also added that he should not offer to do the work too cheaply.

I smiled as I recognized in this one of the provident traits of a Pennsylvania Dutch farmer's wife.

"I'll pay you well," I reiterated.

"I guess you should gif me feefy cent," Mr. Hunsicker said, in a doubtful manner, as though he really did not expect to receive that amount, but was determined to get all out of me that he could.

"It is settled, then, that you take me over. We'll not quarrel about the terms. Allow me to rest here under the cool shade the remainder of the afternoon and give me some supper, and you shall have a dollar."

The farmer was quite overwhelmed by my munificent offer, as was also the hitherto unseen female. For the woman peeped from behind the door of the kitchen to have a look at me.

I bowed to her, and she acknowledged my salutation by coming forward.

"I guess you haf no dinner," she said, in a hospitable way.

The truth was, I had had none, and, being rather healthy, I was not sorry to be ushered to the table, where I was bountifully supplied.

During the meal the woman favored me with many searching glances, which I attributed to her curiosity.

After I had finished my repast we again returned to the front porch.

"You have a nice place here," I said, handing the man a cigar. "The house is new, is it not?"

"About five year old," he answered; and then his wife took up the conversation.

"Ve rented a farm ofer at Nelsonville for a long dime. Bud ve nefer had no childrens, so ve safed some money and bought dis farm," she said.

The woman was eager for a little gossip, and was bound to have it, in spite



of the fact that the dinner dishes were awaiting her.

"Did you ever know old Abram Nelson, of Nelsonville?" I asked, willing to indulge her wish. "It's a long time now since he died—18 years."

"Yes, ve knew him. It was part of his farm ve rented after he died," the man made response.

I could not restrain a smile at his clumsy way of putting it, but before I could ask another question the woman came up to where I was standing and gazed earnestly into my face.

"Ach, Gott! It's true!" she exclaimed, clutching my arms. "It's Nel, little Nel! Ach Gott, I knew it!"

Then her excitement ended in a flood of tears. I gazed down at her in astonishment, and as I looked recollection came to me.

"Why, surely, I used to know you," I said, smiling down upon her. "You must be Sarah. You used to work at Grandfather Nelson's when I was a small boy, and took care of me during my visits."

"Ach, see! he knows me!" the woman exclaimed, turning toward her husband. "He would not forget Sarah! So, so. After so long a dime. Ach, my! And now you are a man, and haf grown so big!"

I really should have explained before that my name is Nelson Conway. I had been rather a small, puny child, and my grandfather called me Little Nel.

Soon Jake went about his business harvesting the oats. Sarah and I sat all that afternoon under the cool shade, talking about old times.

My parents had been dead many years, and it was something new in my experience to be petted, deferred to and made much of. Sarah took up the acquaintance just where it had been broken off 18 years ago, and seemed imbued with an augmented adoration for me.

I felt there was one true, loyal soul in the world whom I could depend on, and, in the natural desire for sympathy and consolation, I recounted to her all my troubles, including the circumstances connected with the bank robbery and the suspicion under which I had groined in spirit for a year now.

"It seems as though I were fated to carry that load to the grave," I remarked, despondingly.

"Ach, no, indeed you von't. Don'd you feel pad about it, Nel. You see it come right. Let dem come to me," Sarah continued, waxing indignant. "Let dem come to me. I dell dem if a grandson of Abram Nelson is a thief. And dey find out some day."

Her assurances comforted and encouraged me very much. For I knew my life had been honorable and square,

at least in all business relations, and her absolute trust in me, after all the cruel insinuations and the cold looks of suspicion, was balm to my wounded spirit.

There was another, the brightest, fairest and best of women, who also felt confidence in my integrity, or at least had done so: one whose affection I had gained. But I had not heard from her since immediately after the robbery, and whether her trust and love still remained unshaken I could not say. I had no reason to doubt her; but then time works wonderful changes in a woman's opinions, often.

After supper Jake drove me over to Nelsonville. Sarah accompanied us, of course. She would have been intensely pleased to have me stay at her own house, but I was longing for the rest and peace which the old homestead seemed to promise, and so could not be persuaded to change my plans.

At the corner of two roads, near the house, dwelt an old widow, who had taken care of my place.

The large farm had been rented out in parcels to neighboring farmers, but the house had remained vacant ever since my grandfather's death.

We stopped at the widow's home for the key, and the old lady came along with us.

Soon I stood upon the porch and gazed around upon the scenes which had stamped themselves so strongly upon my boyhood's mind that even now, after all these years, they seemed wonderfully familiar. I missed the white-headed old gentleman, whose figure had been the most beautiful of all to my boyish mind. With a sigh I turned to the door, placed the key in the lock, turned the bolt, and entered, followed reverentially by Sarah and her husband, and Mrs. Snyder, the old widow.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TOO EMOTIONAL.

She Mistook an Icehouse for the Tomb of Washington.

If the men who become the objects of hero worship could see the evidence of the feeling they inspire, they would possibly be even more reconciled to leaving this sphere for any other, better or worse. Sometimes they do know; and then they tend to exercise abundant charity.

An American who has lived much abroad says that he was present, on one occasion, when a country woman of his own met a famous poet. She saw the object of her idolatry. She rushed forward and struck an attitude.

"And is it possible," she cried, dramatically, "that I look upon Browning?"

One feels that Dr. Johnson, in the same circumstances, would have remarked, gruffly: "Don't be a fool, madam!"

Again, there are times when pathos is showered only upon the dead. T. F. Silleck says that on one of his holiday excursions he visited Mount Vernon, and there, in the grounds, he came upon a middle-aged lady, kneeling before a building at some distance from the monument. She was bathed in tears. Mr. Silleck walked up to her, and asked if she were in trouble.

"No, sir," said she, "thank you very much. I am not in trouble, but my patriotic feelings overcome me when I gaze upon the tomb of the Father of his Country."

"I quite understand," said Mr. Silleck, gently, "but, my dear madam, you have made a mistake. This is not the tomb of Washington. It is over yonder. This is the icehouse."

And drying her tears, the lady moved quietly away.—Youth's Companion.

Like Hogs or Like Gentlemen.

Years ago, when it was more the fashion in Kansas than at present, United States District Attorney "Bill" Perry gave a "stag party" to his gentlemen friends at Fort Scott. He had procured a bountiful supply of cold beer for the delectation of his guests, but hid it away in an upper room as a post-prandial surprise. When the proper time arrived for the revelation of his surprise he said to the assembled company:

"Boys, I have a lot of cold beer upstairs, but before we start I want to know whether you intend to drink like gentlemen or like hogs."

"Oh, we'll drink like gentlemen; lead on, Billy," chorused a dozen voices in reply.

"That settles it," replied the jovial host, as a smile rippled over all three of his double chins. "I'll have to send for more beer. A hog always knows when he's got enough."—Kansas City Journal.

Heredity.

It has been said that the training of a boy should begin with his grandmother. Where this precaution has been neglected there should be some charity for the boy if he does not turn out well, and the generous parent will not refuse to bear at least a portion of the responsibility.

"Your son Robert, Mr. Waxworth," remarked a teacher to the father of one of his pupils, "is not lacking in capacity to learn and has many good points, but he is apt to think that what he does is always right. He is very self-conceited."

"I know it," replied the father, with a deep sigh. "He gets that characteristic from his mother's folks. In other respects he takes after our side of the family."—Youth's Companion.

Mixed Him Rather Late.

When Dr. Whewell, master of Trinity college, Cambridge, was a tutor he once invited a number of his men to a "wine"—as the entertainments of those days used to be called. Noticing a vacant place, he said to his servant: "Why is not Mr. Smith here?" "He is dead, sir," was the reply. "I wish you would tell me when my pupils die," was the indignant answer.—San Francisco Argonaut.

Plain food suits not dainty appetites.—Eliza Tabor.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL.

Pasteur's widow has taken up her residence at the institute bearing her husband's name, and is in receipt of a pension of \$5,000 a year.

—There is talk in Hartford of erecting a suitable monument to the memory of Henry Clay Work, the author of "Marching Through Georgia."

—Mrs. Paul Breen, of San Francisco, has given \$30,000 for the construction of an arch in Golden Gate park, to be a memorial to her husband and sons.

—William Tyler, who has just died at Conkling, Tenn., at the age of 85 years, was a nephew of President Tyler. He was born and spent his whole life in a house once owned by John Sevier.

That famous old Parisian dandy, Prince de Sagan, is said to have recovered his health sufficiently to have prepared for a journey to Cannes, whither he will be accompanied by the princess.

—Mark Twain has been studying the career of Cecil Rhodes, the South African millionaire, and sums up his conclusions as follows: "I admire him. I frankly confess it; and when his time comes I shall buy a piece of the rope for a keepsake."

Senator Quay, of Pennsylvania, has purchased one of the finest homesteads in the Ohio valley, about ten miles from Pittsburgh, and will hereafter live there. The senator's abandonment of Beaver county, where he began his political career, for Alleghany, the stronghold of his opponent, "Chris" Magee, is a cause of wonder to Pennsylvania.

LAUGH MAY CONTAIN A LESSON.

Suggested Improvement for Leaving Street Cars Offered Women.

"Very ludicrous, certainly, but yet it is not quite the proper thing to laugh so loudly that she can hear you."

It was a strong-faced old man who gave expression to the above while standing on the corner of State and Madison streets one evening lately. He referred to the great discomfiture which overcame a pretty little woman who, like most of her sex, managed to get off a street car the wrong way. In alighting she turned her back on the still moving train, and as a result she was left sprawling in the damp street the observed of hundreds of eyes. Her light-colored dress was irretrievably ruined and her flying ribbons slapped and fluttered in the little puddles made by the melting snow.

And her face! It was clothed in as crimson a color as a full-blown hollyhock. Four or five men leaped to her assistance and in a jiffy had the little woman upon her feet. But she did not thank them. Not a word. She just kept her eyes on the ground and, with a wild and startled bound, leaped for the sidewalk, and in a moment disappeared within the capacious doors of one of the bazaars near by. Then those big, bearded pirates who a moment before were all grace and tenderness in their solicitude began to roar.

"Not exactly right to laugh," continued the old man who had witnessed every phase of the above incident, "but it can hardly be helped under the circumstances. If women will persist in getting off the cars contrary to the manner in which they should, why, they must expect to take a tumble. But even with one mistake, if they would only be careful in the future it certainly does seem to me that they might avoid their very annoying acrobatic feats."

"Well, sir," put in one of the men who had assisted the little woman to her feet, "the only reason I can figure out their persistence in jumping off cars in reverse is because they see newsboys and street car employees do it. I have seen one of these boys drop off a car going at full speed, alight on one foot and retain to perfection his equilibrium. How he manages to do it is past my comprehension. The momentum is such that it would topple me over like the proverbial load of apple sauce."

"But there are women who alight with as much ease and as gracefully as the men," said another. "These are the younger women—those of the athletic or new woman type. They never ask the conductor to stop his car, either coming or going, but if you watch 'em you'll see that they jump manful. In my opinion I do not consider myself at all ungallant. These awkward women should be laughed at. It may teach them better sense for the next jump. Let them wait until the cars slow up."

"That's what they ought to do," interposed the old man as he turned to leave, "and if they don't do it they ought to tumble about the streets. It's not the conductor's fault, though I don't approve of his and the gripman's loud guffaws as they pull away from the floundering heap of ribbons and lingerie."

"Ought to have charts posted in the cars giving an illustration of the right way to jump," added another, as with a parting roar the hard-hearted fellows drifted away to their various objective points.—Chicago Chronicle.

Asia's Secrets.

Asia is generally regarded as having been the earliest home of man, yet its interior is still one of the most mysterious parts of the globe. That many unknown things remain to be discovered there is indicated by the results of the recent journeys of Sven Hedin, the Swedish explorer. In the region containing the lake called Lob Nor he came upon a tribe of half-savage shepherds who were unknown even to the Chinese. And besides more than a score of salt-water lakes, and the ruins of two ancient cities, he discovered a great range of mountains, whose highest peak, named by him Mount Osear, is 24,000 feet high, nearly 8,000 feet higher than Mount Blanc, the giant of the Alps.—Youth's Companion.

Club Talk.

Bob Keyworth—Here is a new paper offering a prize of \$50 for the best-written love letter.

Mr. Rouverd (who is being sued for breach of promise)—I'd give ten times that much to get some of mine back.—Tammany Times.

\$500 Reward

The above Reward will be paid for information that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the party or parties who placed iron and slabs on the track of the Emporium & Rich Valley R. R., near the east line of Franklin Houser's farm, on the evening of Nov. 21st, 1891.

HENRY AUOUFF, President.

FINE LIQUOR STORE

EMPORIUM, PA.

THE undersigned has opened a first-class liquor store, and invites the trade of Hotels, Restaurants, etc. We shall carry none but the best American and imported.

WHISKIES, BRANDIES, GINS AND WINES, BOTTLED ALE, CHAMPAGNE, Etc. Choice line of Bottled Goods.

In addition to my large line of Wines I carry constantly in stock a full line of CIGARS AND TOBACCO.

Pool and Billiard Room in same building. Call and see me. A. A. McDONALD, PROPRIETOR, EMPORIUM, PA.

F. X. BLUMLE, EMPORIUM, PA. Bottler of and Dealer in BEER, WINES, WHISKIES, And Liquors of All Kinds. The best of goods always carried in stock and everything warranted as represented. Special Attention Paid to Mail Orders. EMPORIUM, PA.

GO TO J. A. Kinsler's, Broad Street, Emporium, Pa. Where you can get anything you want in the line of Groceries, Provisions, FLOUR, SALT MEATS, SMOKED MEATS, CANNED GOODS, ETC., Tea, Coffee, Fruits, Confectionery, Tobacco and Cigars. Goods Delivered Free any Place in Town. CALL AND SEE ME AND GET PRICES. NEAR P. & E. DEPOT.

EMPORIUM Bottling Works, JOHN McDONALD, Proprietor. Near P. & E. Depot, Emporium, Pa. Botler and Shipper of Rochester Lager Beer, BEST BRANDS OF BEER. The Manufacturer of Soft Drinks and Dealer in Choice Wines and Pure Liquors. We keep none but the very best Beer and are prepared to fill Orders on short notice. Private families served daily if desired. JOHN McDONALD.

PATENTS Careests, and Trade-Marks obtained and all Patent business conducted for MODERATE FEES. OUR OFFICE IS OPPOSITE U. S. PATENT OFFICE and we can secure patent in less time than those remote from Washington. Send model, drawing or photo, with description. We advise, if patentable or not, free of charge. Our fee not due till patent is secured. A PAMPHLET "How to Obtain Patents," with full list of names in the U. S. and foreign countries sent free. Address, C. A. SNOW & CO. Opp. Patent Office, WASHINGTON, D. C. THIS PAPER IS ON FILE IN CHICAGO AND NEW YORK AT THE OFFICES OF A. N. KELLOGG NEWSPAPER CO.