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THE HUSKIN' BEE.

The huskin' bee wuz over, ez the sun was goin' down
In a yellin' blaze o' glory jist behind the maples brown,
The gals wuz gittin' ready 'n the boys wuz standin' by,
To hitch on whar they wanted to, or know the reason why.
Of all the gals what set aroun' the pile of corn that day,
A-twistin' off the rustlin' husks ez ef 'twas only play,
The pearstest one of all the lot—'n they wuz pooty, too—
Wuz Zury Hess, whose laffin' eyes cud look ye through and through.
Now it happened little Zury found a red ear in the pile,
Afore we finished huskin', 'n ye orter seen her smile,
Fur, o' course, she hed the privilege, ef she wud only dare,
To choose the fellow she liked best 'n kiss him then 'n there.
My! how we puckered up our lips 'n tried to look our best,
Each fellow wished he'd be the one picked out from all the rest.
Till Zury, after hangin' back a leetle spell or so,
Got up 'n walked right over to the last one in the row.
She jist reached down 'n touched her lips onto the top of white head
O' Peter Sims, who's eighty year ef he's a day, 'tis said;
She looked so sweet ef Peter tho't an angel cum to stay,
As how his harp wuz ready in the land o' tarmal day.
Mad? Wall I should say I was; 'n I tol' her goin' hum,
As how the way she slighted me hed made me sorter glum,
'N that I didn't think she'd shake me right afore the crowd—
I wuzn't goin' ter stand it—'n I said so pooty loud.
Then Zury drapped her laffin' eyes 'n whispered to me low,
"I didn't kiss ye fore the crowd—'cause—'cause—I love ye so,
'N I thought ye wudn't mind it ef I kissed of' Pete instead,
Because the grave is closin' jist above his poor ol' head."
Well—wimmin's ways is queer, sometimes, and we don't allus know
Jist what's a-throbbin' in their hearts when they act thus 'n so—
All I know is, that when I bid good-night to Zury Hess,
I loved her more 'n ever, 'n I'll never love her less.
—T. P. Ryder, in *Courier-Journal*.

UNCLE JED AND JANIE.

He was neither a tramp, a drunkard, nor a pauper, though a stranger encountering Uncle Jed might, at a casual glance, have easily mistaken for either the grizzled, slouching figure in garments much the worse for wear, frayed and ragged hat-brim, and broken shoes often bound about and held together with twine and withes of bark. But a closer inspection would have noted that the lines on his face were not those which dissipation leaves, and that despite his unkempt appearance there was about him an air of sturdy independence, as of one who felt a right to his own place in the world, while the small troop of children that, mixed with a shaggy dog or two, unusually followed close at his heels, chubby and robust as to face and form, though somewhat disheveled and dilapidated as to garments and hats, showed that, whatever his circumstances, he was decidedly a man of family.
In fact, Uncle Jed, or more correctly speaking, Jeduthan Cranston, was both a householder and a land-owner, and his excursions, so frequent as to almost seem continuous, along the quiet country road, through the bit of woodland, over the long hill, and between the rolling fields were in the nature of a progress from the weather-beaten, little old house that formed his residence to his "other place," something like a mile distant. To be sure, neither estate was of great extent, yet sufficient in the hands of an energetic, thrifty man to have rendered him in farmer phrase "free-handed." But Uncle Jed's industry was never of the violent kind. In a desultory sort of way he managed to raise enough to fill the mouths of the flock who filled the old house till it seemed in danger of bursting. For the rest if a pane of glass chanced to get broken there were plenty of hats lying about with which to replace it and if the barn door threatened to part from its hinges a rail propped against it could keep it in position, all of which seemed to trouble the plump, placid wife of his bosom as little as it did Uncle Jed himself. Perhaps had his farms been adjacent his working hours might have been less intermittent, but his jaunts from one to the other were apt to be broken by periods of repose, if the weather invited, under the shade of a roadside tree or a perch on the rail fence that enticingly

bordered the way and a long colloquy with whoever chanced to be working within conversation range or would spare the time for discussions that ranged in subject from national politics to local gossip.

Withal he was a good citizen and neighbor—honorable, honest, kindly, proverbially slow in the payment of his own debts, but always ready to become security on the note of a friend. Children and dogs gravitated to him naturally, and his horses and cattle, never any of them lean from overwork, rubbed around him unafraid. He was supposed to hold some nebulous theories as to paternal government, fragmentary memories of the stern rule of a grim old father. He had even been known to exhort a neighbor with cause of complaint against his numerous youngsters to "Get a good gad and sock it right to 'em," but under no circumstances was he himself ever known to practice Solomon's advice. And having lived a lifetime in one locality the people, most of whom had known him as boy and man, were so accustomed to his easy-going ways, his many oddities and eccentricities that they regarded him hardly more of criticism than a natural feature of the landscape. With years the sturdy boys and girls grew into sturdy men and women and from sheer force of necessity swarmed out from the old home-hive. But Uncle Jed, a little more stooped and grizzled and slower of step than of old, and with garments that seemed never to be older, yet gave no sign of renewal, still took his leisurely way between his farms and held still more extended conversations across the fences, as one who was relaxing the cares and anxieties of life.

Returning to the neighborhood after an absence of some years I chanced one June afternoon upon my old friend halted under a roadside beech in the cool shadow of the little stretch of wood, one of his favorite resting places, and with his old-time companions, a dog and a child, beside him. Stopping for a little chat I casually inquired if it were one of his grandchildren. "No," he answered, in his slow, soft drawl. "David an' Luke an' Sary an' Lije an' Mary Jane an' Carline all hev children more or less, but this is none o' theirs. You see ours are all grown up now and gone but jist Reuben an' Elias an' Nathaniel an' Jim, an' they're only off an' on as it happens. An' mother an' me we'd had little shavers around the house so long that it seemed real lonesome without any, it jist did, and little Janie here, her ma's dead, an' her pa—well, he's sort o' onsidly like," with an expressive wink to me, "so she's come to live with us, she jist hes, an' we like her, an', well, I guess she likes us." And with a smile that softened and illumined his grizzled old face he looked down to meet an answering smile of confiding affection in the blue child eyes raised to his.

When at last I had started on I heard Uncle Jed say: "Come, Janie, the sun is almost down; you and I must be going on for the cows." At a little distance I paused and looked back through the green wood vista at the two figures. The old man with the child's little hand clasped in his, his frayed hat brim bent toward her, and her diminutive pink calico sunbonnet turned and lifted aslant as to him. So with the shaggy dog close beside them and the sound of their voices floating back in a gentle murmur they went their way along the quiet country road between the ripening meadows toward the sunset.

"That child never should have been allowed to there," was the comment of Mrs. Elnathan Sharp, before whom I chanced to refer to the little circumstance a few days later. "They ain't fit to bring up a child."

"They certainly have had experience in that line," I observed.

"Experience, I should think so!" in a tone of the severest scorn; "their own came up absolutely hap-hazard and without any kind of discipline, and this child will come up in the same way and never be taught the first principle of order or neatness or regular habits of industry. I did think of taking her myself, but before I had fully decided they had her and I suppose are letting her run wild as they did their own."

I glanced around Mrs. Sharp's faultless room and could but contrast her immaculate housekeeping with that which had held sway in Uncle Jed's domicile and mentally confess the prospect of Janie's learning aught of order or system there was scant, indeed. I hope I do not underrate the worth of systematic training, the lifelong value of early formed right habits; still as I looked at Mrs. Sharp's cold face and caught the faint

acidity of her tone there came to my mind a memory of the smile that had flashed like a ripple of heart sunshine betwixt Uncle Jed and his little charge; and with a vision of Janie's delicate face, her soft blue eyes and sweet, sensitive mouth I could but wonder—I hope I was not heterodox—if of the two an atmosphere of kindly, warm affection might not be as conducive to the growth of the little human plant as the most perfect system of precepts and rules without it.

The same September Uncle Jed sickened with a fever. On his first visit the doctor looked grave, and as the days passed his face grew no more hopeful. In his delirium the old man was still going over the familiar round of his life. Sometimes on his way to the "other place" dragging his weary feet over the heavy and burning sand, sometimes stopping to rest under the old roadside beach, and wherever in his fantasy he wandered little Janie, the companion of his latter days, was beside him. And not only in fancy but in reality, for through those weariful days the child clung closely to her old friend, stroking his hand with her light touch, pressing her soft cheek against his, so scarred and furrowed and parched, answering when in unconsciousness he called her name, and watching him with a dismal pain in her soft blue eyes.

But there came a day when little Janie lay stricken with the same fever, and when the doctor felt the swift but weak pulse throbbing in the small, white wrist he shook his head again. It may be that the sanitary condition of the old house was bad, though it had never before affected those beneath its roof; possibly, as Mrs. Sharp intimated, their nursing might have been improved, but it was the best that those who tendered it knew how to give, and who of us can do more? And it might have been in that conflict with disease that the most skilled nurse would with the doctor have had to own defeat. Her fever was not of the violent type of Uncle Jed's. For the most part she lay quiet; sometimes crooning fragments of hymns that she had learned in Sunday-school or Scripture texts. But ever with it all the tide of life ebbed lower and weaker.

And at last one day, one sunny autumn day, clad with the glow and ripeness of the year, an unwonted hush seemed to rest over the weather-worn old house. The doctor made his usual visit, but it was a brief one, and his medicine-case remained unopened. Now and then a neighbor ran in with a quiet step, speaking in half-whispers, and the group of big, broad-shouldered sons made no pretense of work, but hung about the house with a strange dejection apparent in their attitude and faces.

Slowly, so slowly to they who sat under the impending shadow of the day wore away till late afternoon. Uncle Jed had fretted for Janie and they had lifted her from her little cot and laid her beside him. Soothed by her presence he sank into a half-doze, half-stupor. Presently he roused himself. "Come, Janie," he said, "the sun is almost down, it is time we were going to the other place for the cows. Bruno! Bruno!" And the old dog lying inside the bed roused up and beat his tail loudly on the floor, responsive to the call of the master he would never follow again.

Then he dozed away again for a little while and when he woke the same fancy was still in his mind. "How long the way is," he murmured; "let us rest a little. I never used to get so tired. It must be I am getting old. Yes, I'd had little shavers around me so long I missed 'em, and 'twas lonesome going about alone, but you like to go with me, don't you, Janie?"

She nestled closer to him and slipped her arm about his neck. "Yes, Uncle Jed," she whispered, "I like to go with you."

In a few moments he spoke again—very faintly this time. "Come, little Janie, we must be going. How late it grows; the sun is almost down."

He put out his hand so thin and wasted and with all the sunburn faded from it now—and she slipped hers—small, white and chill—into it as if for the starting.

A long, long silence followed, the clock in an outer room ticked loudly, the sunset rays crept long and level across the uncarpeted floor; with bowed heads the sturdy sons went out one by one, treading on the toes of their clumsy boots; a little knot of neighbors gathered around the doorstep; the wife of many years swayed back and forth in the chair wherein she had once rocked her babies, sobbing softly. And by a way as old as the world, yet strangely unfamiliar

—traveled by generations, but still an unknown way—the two friends, one whose years had covered so long and the other so brief a span, had gone beyond the sunset.—*Chicago Times*.

The Indians of Alaska.

The Indian of Alaska is a different person, and the Indian problem in Alaska is quite unlike that which presents itself in the case of the aborigines known as the North American Indians. Whether they had the same origin is immaterial. Environment has created a marked distinction. Laziness is wholly unknown to both native men and women in Alaska. They are noted for their desire to accumulate, and there is one Indian Princess, so-called, in the village here who is really worth \$10,000 in silver, in furs, and in blankets. They are all shrewd and cunning in their pecuniary dealings with each other and with the whites. They are notorious liars when it comes to protecting any one of their own race from any apprehended harm, but they will neither steal from each other nor from the whites. About 1500 of these people wintered at Sitka during 1888, and there is a permanent population of about 500 in the village this summer, and while no white person yet thinks of locking a door, day or night, in the past eleven months I have not heard of a single instance of larceny. Families of natives go off in their canoes 150 miles to remain and work all summer at the salmon canneries, leaving a great deal of stuff behind in their huts and houses, and when they return in the fall, find everything as safe as when they left them.

No tribal relations exist among them. What are called chiefs are simply patriarchs or heads of families, and hence, the first important problem in the task of civilizing them, by breaking up their tribal relations, does not exist to vex the authorities. Not only that, they are eager to adopt the white man's ways, good as well as bad. They have totally abandoned their native dress, except on festive occasions, when they sometimes, not often, appear in it. Mr. Duncan, at Metlakatla, on Amelia Island, has established a saw-mill and a planing-mill, where he manufactures thousands of packing cases which are sold to the salmon canneries. This is an industry that is available for these people, and while giving thousands of dollars every year, under the plea of industrial training, as I have already pointed out, the Government so far, has profited nothing from the methods which have been successfully pursued at Amelia Island.—*New York Times*.

Big Birds in the Transvaal.

Most of the larger birds that I have seen in the Transvaal, Africa, are evidently of great bodily powers, which their ample wings sufficiently indicate. These are half vulturine in form as well as in habit. My companion and I wounded a bird of this description one day with the gun (with which he had full liberty here). I don't know its name, but here is a description: Body and neck pure white, wings black, flat bill 7 1-2 inches long, legs 2 1/2 inches and 5 1-2 feet from tip to tip of the wings. We brought him home and had him going about the green for days. One day we discovered him "bolt-ing" a snake about two feet long (by description the African cerastes, a rather evilly disposed species, one of the cobras) and three days afterward we found him dead.

Next in size to this bird is the Kaffir crane, which is dark-blue in plumage. This is much of the build of the former bird with this exception—its bill is more of a beak, short and strong. Next comes the vulture, truly of the fowl-feeding race, for he is not long in picking the bones of any oxen that die. It used to be a fine of twenty pounds for shooting this bird in the Free States, they were considered so valuable in removing putrescent animal remains, and I believe their services are essential yet. We have half a dozen different kinds of hawks, some resembling our English birds of prey in size and habits, but of much finer plumage.—*Newcastle Chronicle*.

A Watchmaker's Rare Task.

A Boston watchmaker recently had a rare task. It was the putting in order of two watches, each of which had cost \$2500. The case of each of these watches is of pure gold and its works number fully 400 pieces. On the larger dial there are four smaller dials; one showing by a diagram of the sky the changes of the moon, a second dial each month, a third dial the day of the month, and a fourth dial the day of the week.—*New York Tribune*.

CURIOUS FACTS.

Indiana has a double-headed baby girl. Damsone originally came from Damascus.

The number of writers of the Bible is fifty.

James McCosh, the metaphysician, is seventy-seven.

German student life differs very materially from the student life of all other nations.

A white kangaroo, the first ever known, is on exhibition at the London Aquarium.

In France the doctor's claim on the estate of a deceased patient has precedence of all others.

The total number of bodies registered as buried in cemeteries used by London is 1,276,875.

A letter can now be sent round the world in sixty-nine days, via Vancouver, British Columbia.

A Londoner advertises that he is "Porous Plaster Manufacturer to Her Majesty the Queen."

A new and expensive whim in jewelry is to have diamonds bored and strung upon a chain like pearls for a necklace.

One of the wonders of Paris is a well 2350 feet in depth. Hot water rushes out of this well in a stream 114 feet high.

A Kanawha (W. Va.) fisherman caught a jack-salmon that had swallowed one bass and had another half way down its throat.

John Bright said that he owed his quick imagination to his life-long habit of reading poetry every night before going to bed.

A murderer was convicted at Wellington, New Zealand, by bits of newspaper used by him as wadding and found in the wounds of his victim.

S. Landman, of Waynestown, Ind., has a calf without tail or eyes and Robert Jones has another that has the skin of an elephant and no hair on its body.

The most northern electric light in the world is at Hernosand, Sweden, on the Gulf of Bothna, above the 62d degree of latitude. Light is needed there at 2:30 p. m.

The Berlin newspapers chronicle the fact that the heat of the present season has been greater than ever recorded since 1719, the year when regular observations were first taken.

The great bell of Hung-wu, which has long lain half buried in the ground, has at length been lifted by foreign machinery and hung in a pagoda built of iron by a foreign firm. According to prophecy, this bell was never to be lifted until China had entered upon a new career of prosperity.

In the Town Library (Stadt Bibliothek) of Nuremberg is preserved an interesting globe, made by John Schoner, professor of mathematics in the gymnasium there A. D. 1520. It is very remarkable that the passage through the Isthmus of Panama, so much sought after in later times, is on this old globe carefully delineated.

On the sides of the Jesen Fiord, on the west coast of Norway, mountains rise perpendicularly to a height of several thousand feet. Recently stones and rocks, some of which are said to have been as large as a house, began to fall on one side of the fiord. The avalanche continued for more than two hours, and the crash was heard ten miles away.

How He Got the Taxes.

A man named Frye, who lived on Tinker's Island, used to be the town collector of Mount Desert. If he didn't get his money the first time he called, he had an original way of helping the delinquent to remember that he would come again. Taking a piece of chalk from his pocket, he would write the word "Tax" on the woodwork of the room in large letters, and the authority of the official is said to have been acknowledged so well that the chalk was allowed to remain there till time or the payment of the tax had rubbed it off.—*Leveiston (Me.) Journal*.

Electricity on the Dinner Table.

A Brazilian inventor to whom a patent has just been issued proposes to remedy the annoyance suffered from the shaking of dishes upon the table on shipboard by means of an electrical contrivance. His idea is to use an electro-magnetic device. To the underside of the dishes will be attached small pieces of iron, and on the table will be laid long strips of soft iron to which wires leading to a battery will be connected. The use of this electro-magnetic appliance will not mar the appearance of tables, and certainly it should prove effective.—*Times-Democrat*.

FUN.

The chambermaid of an apartment hotel is a suite thing.

Wall decorations are not proud if most of them are stuck up.

The potato is said to be deteriorating, but it made many a mash in its better days.

There are those who like the English sparrows. We refer to the cats.—*Boston Herald*.

Wisdom does not always come in the yellow leaf, but you'll generally find it in the seer.

Everybody dislikes the dentist—at least they show their teeth whenever they go into his office.—*Burlington Free Press*.

Upon Downes—"I've come to you Barker, after a little advice." Barker Ceper—"Well, here's some: never ask for any."

Omaha Teacher—"I would like some one of the class to define the meaning of vice versa." Bright Boy—"Its sleeping with your feet toward the head of the bed."—*Omaha World*.

"Mary," said her mother, severely, "if I am not mistaken I saw your head on George's shoulder. What sort of an attitude is that for a young lady?" Mary (ecstatically)—"Beatitude!"—*Philadelphia Press*.

She—"Do you think of me daily?" He—"I should snicker, my dear little sugar-coated angel. Think of you daily? You bet; and now that the days are longer, I sometimes think of you twice a day."—*Texas Siftings*.

A city child, wandering over a farm-yard with his father, was greatly frightened at the sight of a good-sized gobbler. "Why, my boy, you don't mean to say that you're afraid of a turkey when you ate one only yesterday." "Yes, pa, but this one isn't cooked."

Personal Earnings.

The newspapers are recording the fact that Mr. H. M. Flagler gave Dr. George Shelton, of New York, \$37,000 voluntarily as a fee for medical services to his daughter. Forty years ago this would have made a large fortune for any man, one that he would have felt justified in retiring from business on.

But the value of personal services and fees has grown with everything else in recent years. It is interesting to note what vast sums professional people have earned simply by their personal labors, without counting business investments of any kind.

Patti, the only Patti, has undoubtedly cleared a couple of millions by that wondrous bird warbling of hers. Nobody who ever lived has ever earned so much. Bernhardt, Booth and Joseph Jefferson have each rounded up a million dollars during their professional careers. So probably has Henry Irving. It is said that Henry Ward Beecher earned a million in his lifetime from preaching, lecturing and writing.

Among doctors and lawyers, too, the sums earned by those in the first rank are enormous. General Butler's law practice amounts to from \$150,000 to \$200,000 every year. In one single case he received a fee of \$100,000. The earnings of one law firm in New York, Butler, Stillman & Hubbard, foot up \$950,000. The head of this firm is William Allen Butler, who wrote the poem of "Flora McFlimsy." He dropped into poetry in his youth, but wisely dropped out again and into something that paid vastly better. Helping people quarrel is a far more paying investment than rhyme stringing. The business of this law firm is chiefly the reorganization of railroads. They sometimes receive \$50,000 for one fee.

Among doctors the figures are not so high, but still there are millionaires among them, too. Dr. William A. Hammond had for many years in New York an annual practice worth \$45,000. He will still retain much of it, now that he has gone to reside in Washington, "as a matter of sentiment."

In business the sums earned are equally large. The President of the New York Life Insurance Company has a salary of \$50,000. The Equitable Life Insurance Company pays its President \$100,000 a year. Several railroad Presidents get \$50,000. A New York house that makes a specialty of the sale of roasted coffee pays its buyer \$50,000 a year. He saves that much to them. The general manager of a varnish house in Brooklyn also receives \$50,000 a year. So that it pays better in the long run to have a successful private business than to be President.—*Lowell News*.