

Home Town Sketches

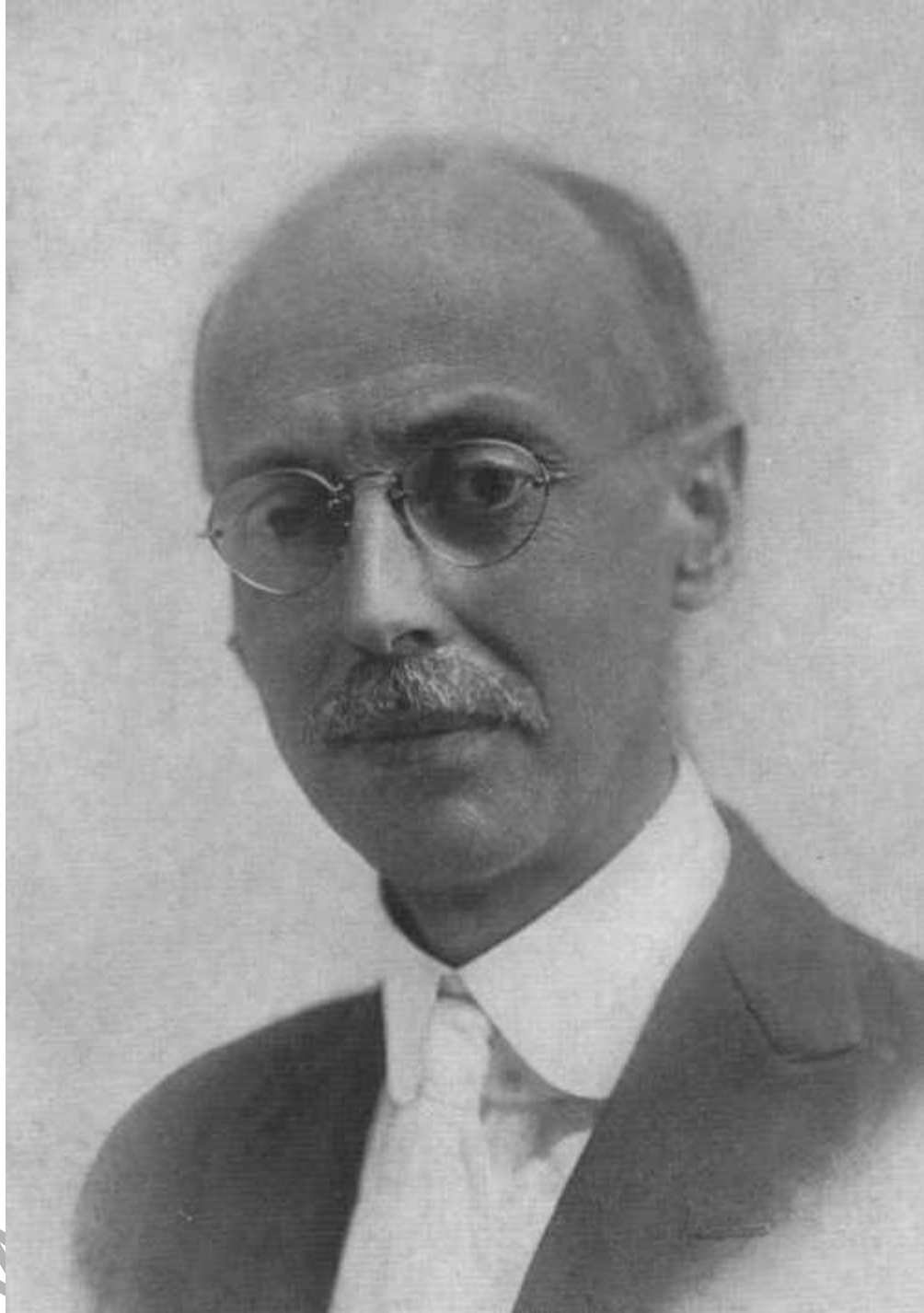
By

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Pages 001 through 100

"Butter"

You may not know that fifty years ago it was a disgraceful affair to purchase five cents' worth of almost anything! Well, onetime when butter was a "bit" a pound, a negress,

whose name no one remembers, made a purchase at Zimmerman's Grocery on North Main Street.

"Gimme five cents' wuth er buttah," she said to the clerk and thus branded herself for life, for she was ever afterward known as "Five Cent Butter," and was never able to get away from that name as long as she remained in Boonville. It is not written that she was a sensitive soul but her life actually became a burden. Did she appear on the streets, she was vociferously greeted all along her route: "Butter! Butter! Five cent butter!" The hue and cry was taken up till she fled to her domicile. She reviled her tormentors, she fought tooth and nail, but always the refrain pursued her: "Butter! Five cent butter!"

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There did come easement when she turned her back on her native town and moved to St. Louis and for some years she had peace. But one day a young medical student (who is now a physician, well known in Boonville) working in the dissecting room of his college, chanced to gaze out of the second story window, and to his unspeakable joy recognized the former resident of his native town standing a few feet away.

All the boyish instincts of the chase rushed upon him and almost involuntarily he sent forth the old cry: "Butter! Butter! Five cent butter!" As if a galvanic current had passed through her body, "Butter" grew rigid, her head uplifted and a stream of profanity issued from her lips: "Some damned devil fum Boonville am round heah!" she shouted.

Quickly the student cut a length of intestine from the body upon which he was operating and flung it at the cursing negress. His aim was perfect. To her horror the loop of intestine struck her full in the face and wrapped itself around her neck. With an ear-piercing shriek she fled the scene pursued by that haunting cry: "Butter! Butter! Five cent butter!"

Lest you waste your sympathy on "Butter," let me say that she was what the good women call a "creature"-a bad citoyenne, who would fight her

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weight in wild cats, and that the police of Boonville were mightily relieved when she moved away and it devolved upon the St. Louis authorities to hold her to the straight and narrow path. Personally I have no doubt that when "Butter" "passed on" and arrived at her destination she duly melted down into fuel oil that helped put a strain on the Plutonian thermostat. Peace to her smoke-there were no ashes!

What Zink Wanted

A lowly citizen was old man Zink; I doubt if he has ever before appeared in print. Yet he lives in the memory of that little boy who heard him speak just three words, more than fifty years ago.

Zink labored, even as did his Maker, six days of the week but, alas! on the eve of the sixth day he took into his mouth those strong waters that slid steal away what brains he had and as he reeled homeward, catching hold of trees and fence palings, he was sport for the big boys.

He must have been "mothered" by his long suffering wife, Becky, during his many years, but, like his kind, he forgot her when all was well. Upon the occasion of the three words the poor fellow, as he staggered along with a heavier cargo than usual, was accosted by a young ruffian who

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gave him a shove which landed poor Zink in the gutter.

As I ran to help the fallen man, he opened his bleared eyes and made his appeal. What did he say? With a great sigh he said: "Zink wants Becky."

Volstead to the Contrary-

Fritz Klotzbueger owned a small wine garden near Boonville and an avid thirst for more potent liquor than he produced, in short, for whiskey. His liking was so well known that his many friends readily believed the story Fritz told about his experience as a soldier in the Union army.

"Ve vas a-fighting der Repels vonce unt there comed a big shell what blew up yoost as it got to me, unt it kilt me deat. Dere I lay mit oudt seeings, feelings unt moovings, but I could hear a leedle. By came de Captain unt I hear him talk. He say: 'Dere iss poor Fritz, deat yet! Wait, once, I'll make sure he is deat-who has some vhiskey got?'

"Den I hear de gurgle from a boddle-oh, such a moosic I Der Captain, he pour down my troat half a pint or so unt I begin to see anchels unt link I vas in Heffen. Pooty quick I open

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mine eyes unt see der boddle half full, so I reach me out and trink der rest. Den I get up on my hint legs yoost as well as effer I vas. Don't told me vhiskey iss not goot!"

A Pioneer Teacher

Old Bob Mason! What memories will that name awaken in the minds of the boys of long ago, for be it known that Robert Mason was the first principal of our public school, which was always called the "free school" in the early days. His regime was for the four years ending 1871. And permit me to use the language of the day in saying regime is right I

The king of Great Britain reigns but does not govern. Old Bob Mason not only reigned, he governed.

Now you must not retain the impression that Prof. Mason ruled by means of the hickory stick. No, he did not believe in the application of hickory for he knew its weakness. A half inch willow is much more resilient, lasts longer, and has more kick to it. Mason favored the willow wand, believing in its magic. He also believed in the saying: "There is nothing like leather," so he kept and used a leather strap of generous proportions,

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supplementing it with the leather of his slipper upon occasion.

Of course I know of this early teacher only by hearsay. My eldest brother, Eugene, used to bring home tales of old Bob's encounters with the big boys, how he would first subjugate, then humiliate them by making the obstreperous one chew "the black rag" or the toe of his slipper. In the latter ceremony, while Mason could hardly have been called more Catholic than the pope, he certainly exceeded the requirements of that potentate, who expects the faithful to kiss the toe of his jeweled slipper. But then Prof. Mason did not deal thus with the faithful, it was the others who met the requirements of discipline.

Old Bob Mason, who was not at all old, was more than an Argus-eyed disciplinarian, he was a wonderful teacher. His iron rule was just what the rough-necks of his day needed. Moral suasion? C'est pour rire! You must have morals for the effectual application of moral suasion and when I tell you that two pupils of Bob Mason with whom I am acquainted are Dr. Edgar Miles and Dr. William Mittelbach you will understand the futility of its application. Big, healthy boys are amoral; the willow wand and the leather

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strap are also amoral and, as "like cures like,"----- you see?

Prof. Mason held that every bad boy was possessed of the devil and that there was no use in trying to teach that boy until the devil had been exorcised, on the principle that no two objects can occupy the same space at the same time. He would proceed to cast out the devil and then fill the void with knowledge. I think that this intensely vital man was equally ready for a fight or frolic and thoroughly enjoyed his double task.

It is the irony of fate that delays appreciation of our parents and teachers until we ourselves have become parents and teachers. By that time those who have ministered unto us are generally beyond the horizon and cannot hear the warm words of gratitude which inevitably follow in the wake of a good teacher. When you think of old Bob Mason, Anthony Haynes and Frederick T. Kemper don't you think there must be a special dispensation that enables the tender thoughts of our maturity to be wafted across the borderland to the ears of those who have labored so yearningly and so thanklessly for us in our youth?

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My First Job

If you remember Mr. Kyle's little grocery in the shack at the corner of Main and Morgan streets, you are past fifty years old. Did you happen to notice a little boy, one cold day in the winter of 1870 or '71, watching a cellar door full of drying codfish on the open street in front of the grocery? He was keeping off the dogs, cats and boys who were longing for a codfish lunch. Well, that was "me" and I got twenty-five cents for the day's work-my very first business transaction.

I didn't mind the tingling ears and toes one bit for I got "two bits" from the great, tall, clean shaven Netherlander, who, it seems to me, was always smoking a long-stemmed pipe and laughing at something or somebody.

One day he hid behind his shop door and sprang out at old Liza with a booming "Boo!" as she passed by. You remember Liza, that wrinkled, diminutive negress who lived on Morgan Street and always swept before her door out to the middle of the street? Well, Liza was properly startled and Mr. Kyle shouted with glee: "I tink I make dat Liza yoomp, ha! Ha! Ha!"

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Charm String Days

Milady, does your memory go back to days of the "charm string," or only to that of the later fascinating fashion of the bangle bracelet? The latter was composed of dimes and quarters in silver, dollar and five dollar gold pieces, artistically chased and engraved with the giver's monogram. A girl of the period had a coin thus prepared from each of her special admirers. Emil Huber, still in the business of engraving in Boonville, was one of the pioneers in this really beautiful work now banned by Uncle Sam who no longer permits the defacement of his coins.

The "charm string" was composed of assorted buttons in enormous variety of color, form and material. So great was the demand for these fancy buttons that they were manufactured especially for this fad and many were fearfully and wonderfully made. No such buttons had been seen before on land or sea. The girls who had many friends would in the course of time gather a really charming collection of beautiful buttons strung on a cord of imposing length.

I recall upon one occasion when Robert Marks was in the fancy goods business in Boonville and hence in a position to favor any child wanting a

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charm string, my little sister, Florence, enlisted his interest in her collection. He made most elaborate promises to the effect that hers would be the longest and most attractive charm string of any in town and then he proceeded to forget all about it. Imagine the disappointed child's grief, when, after dreaming for months of her good fortune in obtaining such a helper, she called at the specified time and Mr. Marks greeted her apologetically; "just a few days ago I had a big box of beautiful buttons and I gave them to a little girl whom I thought was you!"

Capt. John Port

Capt. John Porter would in these days have been called a human dynamo, which is literally what he was, for "dynamis" means force. Perhaps a more modern designation would be TNT. Was there ever more energy compressed into small compass? Two of his distinguishing characteristics were irascibility and pugnacity-both developed possibly by his lifelong battle with the Missouri River at Boonville.

I would not hazard a guess as to how many landings Capt. Porter built for his ferryboat, the "Birdie Brent."

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Now, if there is anything that the Missouri River will not stand for that thing is a permanent boat landing.

So the river hardly waited until the Captain had completed his job to begin taking the laboriously constructed landing to its bosom and on down to the Mississippi.

A perfectly good and apparently permanent landing would vanish over night and another would have to be constructed at once. Is it any wonder that the captain was irascible and apt to cut short an argument with a negro laborer by means of a sharp knife imbedded in said negro's anatomy, preferably in the abdominal region?

A great asset to the surgeons was Capt. Porter, for he always paid for the "twenty stitches," the need for which he provided with great frequency.

You see Porter employed many dock laborers and in those days the employer did not give so much heed to the arguments of such folk. Experienced workers for the captain did not argue but always does this class of labor shift and new ones were typical Missourians and had to be shown.

I shudder to think what would have happened had Capt. Porter to deal with a Labor Union.

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Probably just what happens when TNT is "irritated."

You old boys! Did any of you ever pay Capt. Porter a fare to cross the river when you went netting, fishing or-just went? No boy I ever heard of did and, personally, I was a ferry commuter. To be sure, the deck hands took toll of our pecans but they were moderate and it was no hardship to give up a pint out of a peck. I wonder if the modern boys of Boonville still gather pecans in Howard county? I doubt it. Nothing but automobiles, movies and the radio-poor modern boys!

The Tight-Rope Walker

One of the most thrilling joys of my very young childhood was looking at the tight-rope walkers. What has become of these artists? The first intimation we would have of the coming attraction would be seeing a rope stretched across Main Street from the tops of the highest buildings. This was done several days ahead in order to get the preliminary advertising and then would appear the showman in a blaze of torches, dressed in spangled tights, carry a balancing pole. He would step out from the edge of the roof of

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Neef's book store, gingerly trying the rope with his rosined feet. Our hearts were in our throats as he made the first five or six steps on his shaky suspension bridge of tautened hemp, but I never saw one fall. Then the return trip would be made trundling a wheel barrow, or with a scared, pop-eyed negro boy astride his shoulders! One of these performers used a balancing pole with a blazing torch at each end. After the show the "hero" passed through the crowd gathering the nickels, dimes and quarters in exchange for his tin-type portrait.

What simple pleasures had the country child of fifty-odd years ago! In the days following the exhibition there was always an epidemic of accidents among the boys and girls resulting from attempts to emulate the performance on mother's clothes line and the top of the back fence.

He Made It Better

Central Missouri did beat a path to the farm of Henry Bates, for Bates was the King of Sorghum makers.

You have never realized the possibilities of sorghum unless you have tasted Bates' sorghum

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and if you have done that you will never again be content, for Bates carried his secret to the grave.

He made sorghum for his neighbors, yes, but as he always warned them, "It will be good sorghum, but it will not be Bates' sorghum."

Henry Bates made trips to Boonville with wagon loads of jugs and kegs filled with his delectable molasses.

Being stone deaf he was a mark for the children who knew of his absorption in his product to the exclusion of all else. "How is your daughter, Mr. Bates?" and the answering shout from the deaf man: "Fifty cents a gallon."

A little further on another would ask: "How much will you take for your horse, Mr. Bates?" "Whoa-fifty cents a gallon." And so it continued. The answer was invariable and was greeted with much laughter from his tormentors. Today, it seems to me I would give fifty cents, not for a gallon, but for a tablespoonful of Bates' sorghum on a piece of hot corn bread!

"Were I Not Alexander-"

When Stahl, Stahl and Williams had the Advertiser, I made it a point to be on hand to help

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get out the paper Thursday nights. In fact, I got the paper "out"-by mail. We addressed all the papers by hand and subscribers seemed like old fiends, as we each had our individual list, week after week.

I recall one name of an out-of-town subscriber that was a perennial joy to me - Mr. George Utz. I could never bring myself to write out his given name in full-only the initial and that letter as close to the family name as I could get it!

That was a jolly crowd celebrating the weekly event. There was "Umph" Richardson, superintendent of motive power. Carter Trent and Frank Stahl, devilish good printers. The patriarchal Caldwell, so often in ejaculatory mood, with his periodical and always startling, "God bless my soul!" Dear old uncle Louis Stahl, semper idem -a boy among boys. Artist Lemon, the wandering genius; Phil Stahl, the pulchritudinous and Walter Williams, with every man's tongue against him.

But that never worried Williams -he the Damascus blade, we the whetstone!

Leigh-ho, were I not a physician, I would be a newspaper man!

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The Old Court House

The present generation cannot possibly have the fun we had in and about the old Court House, including the wonderful and mysterious belfry.

I suppose our old-time games of "I spy" and "Patter-Roller," and "Shinney" would seem insipid to our children. Would they enjoy as we did the old Lyceum, the Debates with Mount Sinai, the political speeches and torch light processions?

How much we learned at the court house trials of celebrated cases, argued by such scholarly lawyers as "Jimmie" Johnston, Col. Cosgrove, "Billy" Williams, Judge Draffeb, W. G. Pendleton and many others: I recall whole passages of these forensic efforts at the trial of John I. West, where Johnston prosecuted.

And those debates between Frank Chambers (what erudition he had!), Will Draffen, the bull dog; Walter Williams with his rapier-like arguments, Steve Blaydes and others. The audiences that packed the court room testified to the great abilities of the speakers.

A real community centre was the old court house now gone. And the beautiful new structure that replaces it was built by one of those little

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boys who played about the old one, so long ago, Will Cochran.

"Old Reckie"

Did you learn to chew and smoke tobacco quite early in life, you who are now approaching sixty or even seventy? If so, you started to smoke on Reckmeyer's cinnamon cigars. M-m-m-m! But didn't they smell good? And oh, weren't you terribly sick at the stomach after your first one? And your first chew was of that wonderfully, but deceptively named chewing tobacco, Peach Juice: I see you smile, I knew it! And you got it from Reckmeyer's little cabin-like tobacco store on Main street, between Kyle's Grocery and Mrs. Beck's Confectionery.

Reckmeyer was a little, baldheaded, gray, friendly man. Did any one ever see him outside of his shop?

He could keep secrets, could Reckmeyer. He never told our parents who his customers were - that would have hurt his business.

Heigh-ho! How sweet smelling were those t cinnamon flavored cigars and what a fascinating name had Peach juice chewing tobacco; but oh, what a kick each of them carried!

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Three Teachers

I had three outstanding teachers in the Boonville public school. The first one of these was Mrs. Virginia Harper, whose influence was most pronounced after I had passed from under her supervision. I had been promoted to the next room and was en route to dinner with the throng of children and teachers when Mrs. Harper called: "Emile, how many whippings have you had since you left my room?"

I replied: "I didn't get none!"

With a look of pain on her placid face, Mrs. Harper repeated my answer and then corrected my grammar before the laughing children. So profound was that impression made upon my mind that I have never since made a similar error. The double negative became abhorrent to me and I have gone out of my way to eradicate it from the speech of hundreds of people. Mrs. Harper builded better than she knew.

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The second teacher, Miss Victoria Conkling, was, in my opinion, wonderful in her vigor, her enthusiasm and her ability to make the acquisition of knowledge interesting.

At the same time her discipline and her inculcation

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of the ethics of living, made her stand head and shoulders above good teachers in general.

"Miss Vic" put us on our honor and we would have been ashamed to disappoint her faith in us. If we were to be "kept in," Miss Conkling would read the list and say: "You will stay until five o'clock," and she would depart leaving us on our own.

Once we put one over on Miss Vic. Instead of telling us to stay at our desks until five p. m., she said, with her pleasant smile: "These young gentlemen will remain in their seats until the hands point to five o'clock!"

Well, you know children are apt to be literal and a bright-minded youngster promptly turned the hands of the clock to the desired position as soon as Miss Vic Conkling was out of sight, and then we all felt free to go home

Say! Do you know it has just occurred to me that Miss Vic purposely left that loop hole? What do you know about that !

Hats off, you old boys! Bow your heads, gentle matrons, to the memory of D. A. McMillan, Gentleman!

He was my last teacher in the public schools and I'll never look upon his like again. What a

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glow of pride came over us when this genial principal would call upon members of the class for recitation!

He always said: "Mr. Williams, Mr. Clark," never "Williams" or "Clark." He gave us dignity.

Prof. McMillan always laughed when anything ludicrous occurred in class and he expected us to do likewise. What a friendly teacher he was! We would have gone through fire and water for him.

He really taught us the humanities, although we had little Latin and less Greek. I often think that the reward of good teachers necessarily lies in the enduring affection they inspire in the hearts of their pupils. To our last days will the memory of D. A. McMillan be thus enshrined.

Gully-Way

In the spring and fall, I always felt sorry for Joe Clark, Louis Edwards and those other boys who lived so near the public school-they never had the joy of going home "Gully-way." You may remember that Seventh Street from the school to Spring street, was just a series of hills and gullies

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- a rough country, as wild as if several miles from town.

With what a shout we answered the challenge "Let's go home gully-way!" The hills seemed so steep, the gullies so deep, streams of water to cross at a running jump, a tannery to inspect, then, in autumn, Meierhoffer's cider mill was in operation, with hundreds of bushels of apples free as air.

Further on, Jegglin's pottery and Vollrath's ditto, where wonderful jugs and jars could be picked up from the pile of "seconds," discarded for some trifling imperfection, perhaps because "the hand of the potter shook!" And oh, what targets the big, cracked jugs made, and what joy it was to watch the potters at their wheels turning out a miracle every three minutes!

Can it be that those hills have been leveled, the gullies filled up, the potteries abandoned, the tannery closed and the cider mill ceased from grinding? If so, I positively will not return to school!

"Whistletrigger"

Did you ever hear uncle Johnny Whistletrigger whistle? I never did. They said he was a bush

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whacker during the war and used his peculiar attainment in signalling.

All I know of this old character is that he sold mineral water from Chouteau Springs and he called it "Shootoe water," while the rest of us called it "Show-toe." He was right and the majority was wrong-as usual. His son, Whistletrigger, Jr., left the home fireside with a circus and so traveled abroad in the land. It is told that one day in New York some Boonville boys attended a performance at a museum and were attracted by a most terrible and savage caged Wild Man of Borneo.

Suddenly the "Wild Man" stopped his horrible roaring, reached out his hairy paw through the great iron bars and said: "Hello! Alex Stephens, how is everybody in Boonville?" It was young Whistletrigger and he immediately lost his job.

I recall a little family scene that took place near the Advertiser office one Emancipation Day.

A colored woman had sent her small son back home on an errand. When he had gone half a block she screamed to him: "An, lissen heah to me, Abram Linkum, you just let me see airy fresh cut in dat watermelon and I'll bust your haid with a rock!"

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I suppose you notice how often food is mention in these paragraphs? In this connection, please remember that I am recording the impressions of a youthful person and that the young are, save potentially, but little else than food grinders.

Two Janitors

The first janitor in my school experience was "Blind" Boone. We all liked him because he couldn't see the mischief we did. The building was heated by stoves in those days and Boone would start the fires, then later he would come in to "see" that they were burning by opening the stove doors and thrusting his hand inside the stove!

The next janitor was Kloethe. We called him "Mr. Clady," it was a mystery to us why he spelled his name K-l-o-e-t-h-e, which we could not by any possibility connect with the pronunciation. Well, it made him seem mysterious and we liked that!

The Pork House

Do you remember the pork house at the foot of Main Street? We got our spare ribs at five

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cents a pound in those days and complained that the butchers made them so "spare!" Hog's heads we got for a song. As for livers, I have a very vivid recollection connected therewith.

I was sent down to the pork house for a supply of "cat's meat." Imagine a timid child, gingerly picking his way across the blood-covered floor of the butchering room! Approaching a giant who was operating upon an enormous hanging porker, I asked: "Will you please give me a piece of liver for my cat?"

"Yes, here!" ripping open the hog he reached in, detached a whole liver, which he thrust in my face with bloody hand. Uttering a cry of horror, I turned and fled, pursued by the raucous laughter of the butchering crew. My last visit to the Pork House!

"A. H. C."

A huge man was A. H. C. Koontz, who kept a grocery on Main Street near Spring. I always wondered why he was permitted to have more than two initials and finally decided that it was because of his size-which seemed to my childish mind a perfectly good reason.

I was never fond of this big man, I think his

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bulk overawed me, but it is said that he was full of a quaint humor, most of it Rabelaisian. I recall one bit that will pass.

Upon an occasion he had an open barrel of cranberries in his grocery. A country woman and her daughter came in, noticed the berries and inquired: "What's them, Mr. Koontz?"

"That is a barrel of the finest Texas cherries, ladies." The mother proceeded to sample the "cherries."

"Land sakes, Sal, jest taste these here cherries!" Daughter did so and duplicated the look of disgust which was registered on her mother's face.

"Well, mother, if that's a fair sample of Texas fruit, I don't want any of it, and I guess I'll write to Henry that he needn't come up after me, for I won't live in no such country."

Then you may remember that sign Mr. Koontz put out on the country roads, reading: "A. H. C. Koontz wants to buy your Oats. Bring them in!" Some wag changed the "O" very artfully to "C," and there was much commotion when box after box of cats were delivered at the store-such language!

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My First Lie

At the age of five or six I made my first excursion from the home nest. I didn't know enough English words to carry on a conversation, but I "pieced out" with French and managed to make myself interesting, if not understood. My voyage was across the street to call on Old Mrs. Williams. She and her patriarch of a husband (the parents of Will, Joe and Lizzie) lived at the corner of 6th and High, where later lived the family of Walter Hutchison. I will never forget that dear old wrinkled face of Mrs. Williams. She accepted my fifty-fifty French and English with, "Yes, yes honey, of course I understand have another cookie?" This was the first of many visits.

Now do you think it possible that so young a child would deliberately tell a lie to such a person as Mrs. Williams? Well, I did that thing.

I was trying to tell her about a fight that had taken place between two colored gentlemen, and I wanted to convey information as to the anatomical location of the injury resulting from razor play - one of the combatants having sustained serious injury and she wanted to know its nature. "I don't know how to say it in English, Mrs.

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Williams but I'll tell you in French." And I did. It seemed so indelicate to tell a lady that the negro had his belly ripped open and that his guts had fallen out! So I gave her the French words for these parts, as that seemed so much more polite.

But I did know the English words very well and I liked them hugely!

Apple Dumplings

You remember Wm. S. Meyers, who kept a general store in Boonville in 1870? Later he was with Trigg & Co., then with the Central National, as bookkeeper.

Everybody liked Mr. Meyers but he was a "close" buyer. Nevertheless, as a lad of six or seven, I put one over on him.

I peddled apples in those days to keep myself supplied with candy - that is I bought fine, big, yellow June apples at Grennlease's farm and carried my basket through the streets, permitting whoever so desired to pick out five beauties in exchange for five cents.

I was not bold enough to cry my wares.

One day, business being bad, I mustered up courage to enter Meyers' store and offer the balance

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of my stock, forty apples, for twenty-five cents. Turned them down cold-fifteen cents offered, which I refused.

"Come back if you change your mind," said Mr. Meyers. I went out and found business brisk for awhile, I took in twenty cents before the slump came.

Then I bethought myself of the standing offer, returned to the store and said: "Well, Mr. Meyers, I'll take fifteen cents for my apples."

A casual inspection revealed no material change in the basket, so he said: "All right, take them round to my house and tell Mrs. Meyers to make some apple dumplings for supper." And from the way he smacked his lips over the prospect, I'll bet that Mrs. M. could make real Apple Dumplings!

A. M. & D. S. Koontz

These brothers started in the grocery business together at the northwest corner of Main and Morgan, as very young men and, although later each set up his own establishment, I could never separate them in my youthful mind-both were always so good to me.

All traveling salesmen agreed that these were

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exceptionally fine merchants and no one who has dealt with them can forget their suavity, solicitude and anxiety to serve. It was really a pleasure to shop with either or both. It is my impression that firm was the first in Boonville to put on a free wagon delivery.

Riley Holman

My first year of school was Riley Holman's last. He left before the term was over in the spring. I recall he went in for his books and came out as the big boys were playing ball at recess.

I heard someone say: "Riley Holman is going to stop school." Then Riley went to the home plate and begged: "Let me have my last swat at the ball!"

And will you believe that they refused him this privilege? I thought it cruel, as it seemed to me that Riley Holman was going out of the world! Strange to say I never saw him again, but whenever I saw his name in the paper it brought back that scene and kept it green in my memory.

I did not like Major Hanna because he struck my bare feet with his cane and he could out-argue

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me, a six year old child. Many times I knew his arguments were unfair, sophistry I would call them now, but I had to retreat with tears in my eyes. I have never forgiven Maj. Hanna!

James Gault won my lifelong affection by his helpful kindness to a somewhat puny lad doing a man's work at the railway station. Trunks in those days weighed up to five hundred pounds-real man killers they were and Jim always placed them so that a hundred pound boy could make a brave showing at his job. If I get there first, I am going to tell St. Peter a few things about James Gault!

* * *

We school children made life a burden to "Wagon" Miller on 6th Street near Spring. He had half a dozen shuttered openings to his shop and six boys would slam them to at a given signal, thus putting the whole shop in darkness, and on Halloween we would roll his wagons down into the gully. If this long-suffering citizen ever complained, I never heard of it. I hope he has a choice location in paradise.

* *

A majestic figure was Humphrey Richardson, colored, generally known and trusted as "Umph."

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Huge of body, soft of heart, he always directed the members of his race in the path of law and order. You could always count on Umph.

* * *

What a profane fellow was old man Maddox! when the clergy remonstrated with him he would reply: "Damned if you ain't right, parson!" For years he delivered ice at the telegraph office, always calling out: "Ice! Mr. Telegraph, and damn your rotten old soul if you don't come and get it, the - , - stuff it will melt!"

Dan, who kept a Drug Store just for fun and a museum to make it funnier, was an outstanding character and a real benefactor to youthful chemists who had urgent need of chemicals and exceedingly limited means of purchase. I thought for years that Dan Wooldridge was perpetual sunshine and good - nature. One day I heard him "cut loose" and do full justice to his red hair! I do not recall the occasion for the outburst, but I was thankful to be an innocent bystander.

* * *

What a meticulously neat and clean old gentleman was Dr. Wm. H. Trigg, and how he did keep up his enthusiasm for business to the end of a long life.

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And what a contrast was Capt. Beard, who used large quantities of chewing tobacco and in spite of much practice, he could not or would not put enough force back of his expectorations! Did you ever see Capt. Beard without his umbrella?

Perfect Billy Goat whiskers had old man Keithley, the drayman. I wish I had a photograph of that worthy. Did you ever deal with a kindlier man?

What enormous feet had Hip Hop Boom! The old negro's real name was Ham but we always referred to him as Hip Hop.

Driftwood

How childlike is the primitive mind! Perhaps it would be more exact to say how primitive is the childish mind, for as the child is the inheritor of all the ages that have gone before, so he must pass through, in our brief lifetime, all the stages of development that has taken perhaps a million years in actual time!

We can better understand this since Einstein's law of Relativity has been promulgated. But most of us stop on the way and so have childish

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primitive minds in adult bodies. What is this all about, you ask?

Well, there was once a Boonville man who, looking for a "hand" along the river bank, saw a likely negro industriously fishing driftwood out of the water.

He hailed; "Rastus, you want a job?"

"I done got me a job, boss man."

"What's your job and what do you get?"

"Well, sah, Capt. Faris he done hired me for to ketch driftwood, and he gibbs me haff o' whut I ketches."

And do you think that Rastus could be convinced that there was anything wrong in the bargain? He could not, for Rastus' mind struck a snag when he was about five years old. Some folks are like that.

Three Little Maids From School

I wonder, I have so often wondered, what became of Sarah Reed, an auburn haired girl, who sat across the aisle from me in "Mrs. Hanna's Room." And why should I wonder especially? Well, I was a very shy little boy and one day Sarah held up her slate, upon which she had written

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some words. To my amazement I read: "I love you."

There was another girl with blue-grey eyes and flaxen hair. Her name was Carrie Kinsloe. She made me no such declaration as did Sarah, but she had such a sweet smile, such a friendly face and such a sunshiny disposition that her picture has never faded from my memory. I have no doubt she lives in Cooper County and makes a most delightful grandmother-for that was fifty years ago!

The name of the third little girl that is enshrined in my heart is one that even now will cause a stir in many mature breasts. Gentlemen, I give you Deedie McMillan! Deedie the amiable, the friendly, the redoubtable. And what is the claim of this young lady upon my heart? I will tell you. She slapped the face of a big boy who had just bloodied my nose!

A Scientist

Do you know that William Mittelbach stands high in the world of pharmaceutical science? Yep, doubtless you do in a vague sort of way, but you

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do not think how high he does stand as you greet him with: "Hello, Doc, " which, by the way, is a villainous manner in which to greet a learned man, only because of its implied friendliness, But to resume. I recently dined at the home of the famous archaeologist and teacher of pharmaceutical science, Dr. Whelpley; after dinner he threw some pictures on a screen and, to my surprise there appeared that domelike head with which all Boonville is familiar.

"That," said Dr. Whelpley, "is Dr. William Mittelbach, an authority on things pharmaceutical He and I have done much scientific work together And then we had a little talk about the owner of that great head.

Please put a little more reverence in your greeting next time you meet Dr. William Mittelbach, the learned!

Pine Shavings, Bees, Biscuits an' Everything!

Did you have to "go after shavings" when you were a boy? "Now, what in the world does that mean?" I hear the modern child ask. Well, we burned wood in those days and we started the fires with "shavings."

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My favorite place for this commodity was the carpenter shop of Mr. Marc Williams on the south side of Sixth Street between Morgan and High. I would gather huge bags of long, curling, clean, delightfully fragrant pine shavings, such as we will never see again, as white pine is practically out of the market.

Mr. Williams always gave a welcoming nod and a smile that seemed especially sweet because so rare on his preoccupied and somewhat sad face. Don't you recall that calm, unhurried, gentle man as he walked to and from "jobs," always carrying a strip of molding or something like that? Seems to me I never saw him empty handed.

The first beehives I ever saw were in the Williams' back yard, and Mrs. Williams always had delicious flat brown biscuits in a stone jar for little folks. With some fresh, home made butter for the first half dozen and some comb honey for the remaining six-oh, boy!

Later Mr. Williams had his carpenter shop back of his residence and we boys moved in our chemical laboratory, never thinking of the fire risk. Once we made some oxygen gas, using a gun barrel for a retort-which we put in the shop stove for the requisite heat. In some way the

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home made retort became clogged and we were created to an explosion that divided the stove into four parts-two ends and two sides-with several sections of stove pipe for good measure!

We got the fire put out with but small damage before Mr. Williams returned, to be greeted by his angry assistant carpenter with: "Meester Veelyams, look, see once, what dose dam boys dey do!" But to our great relief Mr. "Veelyams" refused to take it seriously, so his son Walter, Charlie Swap and myself, the amateur chemists, went unwhipped of justice.

George W. Ferrel

No anthology would be complete without mention of George Ferrel, the Edgar Allen Poe of Boonville.

We who knew him as a young, promising poet could never have imagined him as he was under the handicap that clouded his last years.

What a faithful friend he was, how beautifully lie could write and how he loved good books, we all knew.

But there developed a bitter humor later in his life, born of disappointment and disillusion.

Upon one occasion when a supposed friend, a

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Jew, had done Ferrel a wrong, he swore vengeance upon him and raved: "I'll get even with him if it takes a lifetime and if he dies first, I'll go out to the cemetery and beat his grave with a ham."

Then realizing the bon mot he had made, he first smiled, then burst into laughter and promptly forgave his unfaithful friend.

My First Fish Story

How easy it is to believe that which you wish to believe was demonstrated to me at a very tender age. I was down at the river near the ferry landing with an older brother playing in the water when we heard a splash. He reached down and pulled in a fish weighing some ten pounds.

This fish had been "tethered" in the river but we persuaded ourselves that it was loose and caught just in time, as it was escaping. The ferry was approaching and we saw two men, one of whom was Ben Goodman, gesticulating wildly as they saw us walking rapidly away. We could not hear what they said but they acted suspiciously like fish owners so we did not wait but stepped on our accelerators, so to speak.

We carried the big fish through the streets in

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triumph, telling our story so often that we finally believed it ourselves. The fish was cooked, eaten and duly forgotten by most people, but my conscience was so keenly alive that I ran and hid at every ring of the door bell for weeks.

Although I was the less guilty I was the only one who suffered. I missed the joys of ferry boat trips for a month, detoured every time I saw, policeman and frequently was awakened at night by visions of the constable coming to take a six year old boy to the dark jail for the rest of his life. A big price to pay for a fish? Yes, but he was a big fish and see how long he has lasted!

Geniton Apples

There is a citizen of Boonville whom I have never seen, yet for him I have a genuine affection.

H. W. Jenkins is his name-know him? It came about in this way. You perhaps know something about apples, real apples I mean, not Ben Davis or Gano or any of the measly mealy potato tribe! At one time C. C. Bell was the apostle of the Ben Davis and he will have to spend at least fifty years in purgatory to expiate that sin, for the Ben Davis is no more an apple than is the English sparrow a bird-in fact they are

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interchangeable - the English sparrow is the Ben Davis of birddom and the Ben Davis is the English sparrow of pomology.

So much for that. Now I have always believed that the original apple-the one that Eve gave to Adam - was a Geniton - that's why Adam couldn't resist taking it, stands to reason does it not? You know very well the Great Horticulturist would plant only the best apple tree in His garden. Well, then!

But I digress. After dreaming for years about the excellence of the Geniton and feeling sorry for anybody who didn't know how very good it was, I remembered that some wise man said that imagination plus the flight of years had a lot to do with such things and that nothing was as good as it used to be, not even a Geniton apple, because you didn't have the boy appetite!

That seemed logical, especially after trying out a lot of different barrels marked "Janet," "Janeton" and "Geneting." So I had about resigned myself to the fact that I was mistaken about it or that there were no more good Genitons. One day in a burst of confidence when I was ordering some grape vines from Mr. Jenkins, I made some melancholy comment about the vanishing Geniton. Back came a letter saying: "I have a real

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Missouri Geniton tree and am sending you a few of the apples - try them. I think you will find them good."

I opened the box and inhaled the aroma - fine! Now for the test ! the supreme test. Was the fault with me, with the Geniton, or both? I braced myself and "bit in."

Glory be! It was a real Geniton, and it tasted as it did forty years ago - better, if possible. I reported to Mr. Jenkins and didn't that man graft sixteen Geniton trees and send them to me? And now they are planted, doing well, and if you will call around in about seven years -

Fakirs

Do you remember the "Turner's Wonder" outfit with its refrain:

"Take another bottle of Turner's Wonder.

"Take another bottle or two, or two!"

It must have been well done, their horn blowing, since its reverberation still persists although the "remedy" ceased from troubling since its spirit went to rest many, many years ago.

Then came "Wizard Oil" with its wagon load of musicians and barkers. They provided real entertainment

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and did no great harm with their oil of sassafras.

Much later came the troop of the Kickapoo Indian Remedies, who prospered so greatly that they hired the Thespian Hall, which was nightly filled with boys and gullible adults listening with open mouth to the sonorous lecturer who came "to tell you who and what these people are!" waving towards a dozen Indians in full war paint.

So eloquent was this fake "doctor" that people could hardly await the end of his harangue to storm the stage with dollar bills, fives-even tens, in exchange for bottles of, let us hope, innocuous infusions of "Indian herbs."

"We have done a land office business here," the chief fakir told me, as he bought railway tickets for the outfit. Just as the train whistled for the bridge, came an excited citizen, inquiring for Mr. Kickapoo. "I want 12 bottles of Indian Blood Remedy," he shouted, waving a ten dollar bill. "Mr. Kickapoo" wasn't going to miss that ten spot, so he hurriedly unlocked a trunk, handed out the dozen bottles and pocketed the bill with a wink at me.

"Nine dollars to the good," he chuckled, as the train pulled in.

And so it goes. People with the childish minds

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that most of us have, are so easily deluded. They come under the hypnotic influence of fakirs, who profit greatly without even understanding the psychology of what they do. In fact, that explains the success of the various cults whose "healers" may be sincere, but whose leaders are generally cunningly sophisticated. Given a touch of religious and a purposely obscure literature the people fairly "eat it up." They will say: "That book must be mighty deep stuff - I can't understand it."

Poor boobs, it was never meant to be understood!

R. I. P.

One hot summer day I met poor crippled Haydrac - out on the dusty road five miles from town.

What a restless, wandering Jew of a man he was! Did he ever use the sidewalk? I never saw him except in the middle of the road or trudging through alleys, muttering to himself. Poor mortal with the crippled limbs and mind! I hope he sleeps well after Life's fitful fever.

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A Martinet

What a dour man was Matt Singleton, teacher, and, later, lawyer I never saw him smile. He taught at Kemper's and then later had his own Academy.

They said he was a wonderful teacher of Latin and mathematics and an incomparable disciplinarian.

But he seemed to take life so seriously, did Matthew Singleton!

Down the River

I have never had the courage to go down the river past the old lime kiln and on-and on, where the bluffs were so beautiful, the ferns and pawpaws so plentiful.

I have not had the courage to go there since I was told that the railroad people had blasted away my beauty spots to make room for their ugly road bed.

Yes, I suppose it had to be done, but in my mind that romantic beauty still exists. I can see all the plants, ferns, lady slippers, May apple, sanguinaria, violets-just as they were. And oh,

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those names of the boys and girls which I can see, carved in the face of the cliff!

And to think, although cut in enduring stone, they exist only in fleeting memory-but after all, that is where they have real meaning.

Mother Beck

The memory of Mrs. Beck is going to outlast the third generation since her demise, for be it known that Mrs. Beck made a Ginger Bread that was fit for the gods of high Olympus

and to quaff a mug of cider while degustating that ginger bread was a foretaste of paradise, indeed!

But it must be done decorously, almost prayerfully, as beseems such a privilege. Otherwise you were warned in no uncertain tones what was seemly and if then you persisted in ribaldry your summary ejection from the House of Beck followed as night follows day, only much more quickly and you could not return to fight another clay, either, for you generally "got a-plenty."

A very particular woman was Mrs. Beck and she didn't care who knew it. In fact she insisted that everybody did know it, including Father Muir, the parish priest and his more strenuous successor, Father Hoffman. For you may recall

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that Mrs. Beck went daily to mass and was a pious woman during church service, but going to and return from, there rumbled words from her chest for all and sundry to hear-and to heed, my masters!

A great heart beat in her bosom and a kindly one for all her irascibility. Her high pitched voice was as raucous as that of an angry hen when Mrs. Beck was irritated but it toned down to a gentle clucking for little children who braved her formidable presence in search of cookies and popcorn balls. Then it was that the mother heart transformed her and no child went forth empty handed.

It is told that Mrs. Beck's recipe for ginger bread was published some years ago. Possibly so, but her magic touch could not be transmitted and while the recipe may produce good ginger bread, it will not be "Mrs. Beck's Ginger Bread." Indeed we shall never taste its like again, it was, so to speak, *sui generis*.

The Knight of the Ben Davis

I got a "rise" out of C. C. Bell in defense of the Ben Davis. I did not think he would pass up such an opportunity. Mr. Bell says the B. D.,

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is a commercial success and puts money in our purse. Yes, so is and does the Early Ohio, the Irish Cobbler and the Burbank but we don't call them apples - except in French (*Les pommes de terres*). Why does the Ben "ship well?" Because it contains no juice. And as for flavor, why even the worms scorn it!

The question arises, "Do we raise apples to 'ship well' or to enjoy as one of the blessings of life?" If the first, then I grant you the Ben Davis is a huge success, but can you imagine a grateful human being thanking God for a Ben Davis? And can you imagine him not giving thanks when he bites into a Geniton, a Delicious or a Stayman?

Do you know that unrepentant scrapper, Mr. Bell, is not content to praise his favorite "potato," but he actually slams the Geniton apple.

In addition to your original sentence, Mr. Bell, this court fines you a barrel of real apples, payable next winter, and paroles you during good behavior.

George Koontz

A real character was George Koontz. He did not keep his - own store, as he could not abide the restrictions of a settled business and the open

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spaces appealed so strongly that he made periodical excursions to distant parts, where he lectured and showed stereopticon pictures.

Upon one occasion in the wilds of Arkansaw, he became disgusted with the lack of interest and the ignorance of his audience. Part of his program consisted of Biblical views. In his most impressive ministerial manner, he announced: "The next picture, ladies and gentlemen, will be that of an individual of whom you have probably never heard-Jesus Christ!"

It is said that George took the next northbound train-just ahead of an indignation committee.

Mr. Koontz had a most wonderful beard more than six feet long, but I never had the happiness to gaze upon it, as only the top twelve inches were visible.

The Four Musketeers

About the year 1871 there began among three little boys a friendship that has waxed stronger with the passing years and survived all the complexities and the strivings of their lives. It is so easy for the young to form friendships and so difficult to retain them as we grow older that all

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Boonville still seems interested in this unusual attachment that yet endures and shows new beauties in the slanting rays of the westing sun.

For the younger folk I name the other two: Dean Walter Williams and Dr. Charles Swap.

Then along about forty years ago Dr. George A. Russell appeared in Boonville; tall, lank, quiet with the look of longing in his eyes which betokens nostalgia. This look did not remain long after we three had adopted the elongated medico, but was replaced by that

charming twinkle which you have all seen and, seeing, have thereby been made easier in your pain.

What high ideals we had and cultivated, how we planned lives of service and honorable dealings even while we were children has, I am sure, influenced our whole lives and, through us, that of thousands of our fellows. There was no formality in our association, no stated meetings, no rules, but it was taken for granted that we stood "One for all and all for one."

Our contacts were not all intellectual ones as restaurateur Wagner could testify. Gastronomically Porthos Swap ever strove, but ineffectually, to out - do Aramis Williams. It was suspected but never proven that Paillou had an extra stomach for use in emergencies. Russell said little but consumed

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greatly. Many a card game ran into the small hours at Swap's office. We would send Walter Williams home at midnight in order that he might not be contaminated by the poker game which followed. You see, we sensed that high moral plane which would be required of the future Dean of the University School of Journalism!

When the time came to take up the burdens of manhood in our several fields we, the absent ones, always managed to make a yearly pilgrimage to Boonville in order to compare mental notes as well as to ascertain whether or not Mrs. Wagner could still prepare oysters in her old, delectable style. I think she outdid her ordinary skill for "her boys." Charley Wagner gave her moral assistance only, as she would not trust him to manipulate the "ranch," as he called the kitchen range dedicated to the service of the gourmets.

Upon one occasion I had an attack of imaginitis and hied me to Dr. Russell's office for professional assistance. To my great surprise I found Dr. Swap in the waiting room with a long and sorrowful countenance, bent upon the same quest. I diagnosed his illness at once as lovesickness; a safe bet, as Charles was perennially in love, but not always with the same girl. We

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chatted freely until several honest-to-goodness Russell patients came in and then we moved to Dr. sells adjoining sleeping quarters, deciding perhaps we were not so very sick after all.

Now Russell had in his room a weird piece of furniture. It might have been a wardrobe, a chest of drawers, or a bureau but it was none of these things. It was a folding bed, fearfully if not wonderfully made. I think Dr. Russell purchased this article when Noah auctioned off the contents of the Ark. In operating the contrivance you caught hold of each side of the top and, upon pulling downward, the affair would split in the middle,

four legs would fall out of its abdomen and a creaking voice from its interior would proclaim its identity, a bed!

As we saw Dr. Russell approaching we decided to climb into the bed, cover up and start groaning in our pretense of illness. We pulled down the contraption and jumped in, covering ourselves up to the chin. Alas! We had failed to notice a locking device on the side of the bed, so the cursed man-trap proceeded to double up like a jack-knife and stand on its hind legs, with us inside firmly imprisoned, just as Russell entered the room!

Then Dr. Russell started to laugh. He began

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with a chuckle of joy as he saw our predicament, then as we begged, implored, commanded our release he shouted, roared and choked with laughter. In spite of our painful situation we had to laugh with him as he rolled on the floor with the tears streaming from his eyes. Finally, gasping for breath, he managed to speak: "If you fellows could only see yourselves!"

And I can imagine we were a sight, our heads sticking out of the top of the bed which was, of course, upright. Fortunately for us we had not lain the other way. I think that was the only interesting meeting Walter Williams ever missed so Russell proposed calling him before releasing us. And I had entirely forgotten this episode when Dr. Swap wrote to me about it and suggested that it be included with the home sketches.

With passing time, how sweetly mellow do the early days grow! Our domes and temples have silvered but our hearts have remained the hearts of the little boys who chummed together in the long ago. The years have only enhanced the affection with which we regard each other. On one day of each year we turn back the calendar, disregarding the forty years that have elapsed since our separation. Not yet has the shadow of prescience dimmed our vision, so we, growing old together

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and having the power to reverse Time itself upon occasion, will enjoy the combination of youth, Maturity and the Sunset of life in the hope that we will deserve the classic benediction: "Well done, thou good and faithful . . ."

Entrance and Exit

You will all remember the genial and well upholstered Henry Huber who kept a general store on Main street north of Morgan. Henry kept everything in his big building except what small boys wanted most, fish hooks and lines. He had a hearty laugh and never scolded when little customers took lumps of brown sugar from the open barrel, so you know we all loved him.

But there is a limit to even a good man's patience. Upon one occasion the Huber establishment was overrun with mice which became bold and trap-shy so Mr. Huber got a good cat who thoroughly understood her business. The upper floor was filled with appetizing groceries dear to the heart of a mouse and there they held high carnival, for the mice were protected by a solid wooden door which kept the cat below stairs. One day Mr. Huber gave his young son, Henry, Jr., a hand saw with instructions to go upstairs and

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cut a hole in the door so that the cat could go in and out of the storeroom. When the boy reported the job finished Huber, pere, went up to inspect it and found two neat holes in the door about six inches apart. "Why did you cut two holes, Henry?" he asked in astonishment. The boy's answer marked the limit of his father's patience, for he replied: "One for the cat to go in and the other for her to come out!"

Colonel True Hickox

Col. True Hickox was a famous old bachelor farmer who had a large farm some two miles south of Boonville, where he held open house in his expansive Kentucky style for many years. His sister was the chatelaine and together they dispensed a hospitality which left nothing to be desired.

All Boonville masculinity looked forward to the Colonel's Saturday visits and there was never any doubt of his presence, for he always made a dramatic entry, driving his high-headed, perfectly matched bays with taut reins at great speed, turning the corners on two wheels until he reached the livery stable where the attendants swarmed out to meet him.

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Everybody liked Col. True. He had a Gallic courtesy that was irresistible alike to both sexes and no sooner was he afoot than he was surrounded by his admirers whom he entertained with selections from his apparently inexhaustible store of jokes and stories. Seemingly the appreciation of his hearers enhanced his own joy in the telling, for Col. Hickox's staccato laughter could be heard far above that of his entourage. So characteristic was his mirth that folk would say: "Col. True is at it again!"

I regret that Col. Hickox's stories may not be printed here. Without the Colonel's inimitable bonhommie, tact and charm of narrative, they would sound crude and nude, so to speak, for Col. True had the faculty of clothing the nakedness of his risqué tales with the velvet and lace of Boccaccio and Chaucer. But you know the oldtimers furnished pabulum too highly spiced for our delicate appetites. The strong meats of literature are not for fledglings. And so Col. Hickox must be remembered as a gentleman of the old school - gallant, kindly, chivalrous, amiable - who contributed generously to the joie de ire. Peace to his ashes!

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"Her is so Sorry!"

Since I began writing about Boonville folk I have had many letters which I would like to publish but cannot for various reasons. Here is one, however, that is so natural that, not being forbidden to do so, I am going to give to my readers. I am "lifting" just one little story from a most interesting letter, resisting the temptation to print all of it.

"Your mention of so and so brings to my mind a skeleton which has `lived' in my closet since childhood, a crime which I committed and which I am now going to write you in that confession which is good for the soul. In my very young days I spent much time with the McCutchen family that lived on the north side of College Hill. Next door lived the Jegglin family where I was frequently sent on errands. I could never understand what this good German housewife said, I thought she was always angry as her language sounded as if she was scolding me. There was a high terrace in front of these homes, very rough and unsodded, with a narrow path at the top.

"One day a small, broad-shouldered child, almost as broad as she was high, red-faced, excited and frightened by Mrs. Jegglin's seemingly

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terrible language, came running out of the Jegglin home to the narrow path just as a frail, delicate looking boy was coming along. He would not give way so that chubby female of the species, being more deadly than the male, gave the boy a push which sent him hurtling over the precipice. I was that female.

"The boy picked himself out of the dirt, crying and hurling imprecations at the red-faced little virago, who came back with the knock-out bluff, `My father is a policeman!' The small boys gathered about sympathetically inquiring, `Did she hurt you, Herman?' Mrs. Jegglin added her gutterals to the hue and cry and no murderer ever left his victim more guiltily than did that little she - devil. But I have always felt that somehow, somewhere, sometime, I must face that boy and make amends for the crime I committed more than fifty years ago!"

Absolvo te, Grace Kemper Toll, and I have no doubt that when that once frail boy, now grown into the handsome Herman Walz of today, learns who it was that laid him low so many years ago, he will gladly offer to kiss the hand Vat smote him!

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Leaving the Home Nest

In 1881 I completed my study of telegraphy and was ready for a job. Leaving the home nest was a terrible experience for a sixteen year old boy who was about as sophisticated as a modern six year old girl and who had a passionate love for his home surroundings.

My first employment was as station agent at Clifton City, where I spent two unhappy, home-sick months. Then after a week at home, I was sent to Holliday, Mo., where I began to get a more manly grip on myself.

It seemed a strange world to me, this being in a position of authority. The village station agent was a leading citizen and I enjoyed that status. At my boarding house there were two young ladies with elegant manners acquired during a residence in Chicago. They were the daughters of the innkeepers and very much in evidence. One was a hard working, really superior girl, who managed the dining room. Her sister was more ornamental if less useful. The mother tried to conceal the fact that only one of her daughters got up before ten a. m.

Always beautifully "dolloed up" and knowing her way about, this sophisticated young lady had

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no difficulty in winning the new station agent; in fact I had no chance whatever of escaping the charmer and I did not struggle. It was a pleasant situation for me and I was envied by more than one callow youth, but the knowing ones only laughed and that made me furious. I dimly sensed the fact that I was skating on thin ice but nevertheless I kept on my skates.

When the Fourth of July came we young bloods ordered a keg of beer for our celebration and I acted as host for the keg, it being ensconced in the station house and free for all, including myself. Entirely unaccustomed to the potent brew current in those days, I partook not wisely but too often and the result upon one of my temperament was astounding. First I shot out a window glass and the sweet applause I received encouraged me to further marksmanship with my trusty and rusty old 44. The station stovepipe looked a fascinating target, so I drilled it full of holes to the intense delight of all those present.

I managed to get through the day without causing a wreck on the railroad but my reputation at the hotel was entirely ruined except with the young lady herself, I think she was rather proud of me. But in the cold, grey dawn I was thoroughly

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ashamed of myself and I vowed "never again!" A vow, I am happy to say, I have kept to this day and I am safe, sane and-sixty! The innkeeper and his family moved back to Chicago shortly afterwards, there was a tearful parting between the ornamental daughter and myself but - I never saw her again.

It was in Holliday that I formed another of those friendships with which my life has been blessed. This was with the daughter of the village schoolmaster and the friendship still endures. Bessie was a school girl in those days and it gave me pleasure to accompany her

to school, carrying her books. In the evening I escorted her to prayer meeting in the little white village church where I learned to sing with her those robust gospel hymns which, much later in life, made such fascinating and hypnotizing lullabies.

Bessie married that sterling newspaper man, Will Reid, beloved of Missouri editors. She has a grown daughter, Marguerite, most soothing to the eye and for whom I have an avuncular affection, although Bessie never promised to be a sister to me, as she probably would have done had the necessity arisen. Mrs. Reid has had the trials so common to humanity. Her mother was an invalid for many years and found comfort in the

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ministrations of her dutiful daughter. Scarcely was this burden lifted when her husband was stricken and for years leaned on the devoted wife who never failed him. How many quiet tragedies are daily enacted in which the actors play their parts so naturally, so uncomplainingly that we hardly realize what is taking place until the final curtain! Some natures break under the strain, others come out refined as does pure gold from the ordeal by fire and we are proud to know them as our friends.

Trying My Wings

Virден Young, a Howard County boy from Franklin, just across the river, learned telegraphy in the Western Union office at Boonville. Nearly everybody called him "Daisy" Young and the feminine appellation seemed appropriate for he had the habit or faculty of blushing to an intense scarlet upon slight provocation. Those who did not know him very well were apt to pronounce his first name "Verdant" but he was anything but green. For superlative self-assurance I never saw his equal. Young's first employment was in Kansas but he did not remain there very long.

Upon Virден's return to Boonville he persuaded

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me that the thing to do was to go westward in search of adventures and a good job. He fairly glowed with enthusiasm as he described the roseate life of a telegrapher in the far west, so we agreed to raise twenty-five dollars and take the plunge. In those days it was comparatively easy for telegraphers to travel on freight trains, so we had no difficulty in reaching Hannibal on the M. K. and T. line.

To me Hannibal seemed a very large city. They had just installed the new electric light system which consisted of a dozen very high towers topped by sputtering electric flares, too high above the streets to give any illumination worthy of the name, but we thought it wonderful. We applied to the superintendent of telegraph of the old Hannibal and St. Joe railroad for jobs and secured them, although our claims to skill were mostly bluff. Had the officials given us a thorough try-out, we must have failed. Thanks to Young's colossal gall we even bluffed the man assigned to test our ability and we were given passes to

stations that lay en route to Atchison which was our objective. So elastic is a boy's conscience that we were enabled to run by our stations without a qualm, telling the conductor that we would go on to Atchison and return the next morning.

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The conductor carried us to Atchison without question but our reception there not being up to expectations, we made for Kansas City as the real gateway for the Golden West. The railway officials in Kansas City said they always needed telegraphers in the far west so they gave us passes to Wallace, Kansas, where we arrived at midnight stone broke. There was a light shining in the superintendent's office, so we immediately called there, presenting our credentials. Young yet a job immediately, taking a train to his destination within fifteen minutes; but I was left alone in a strange town without a cent and with not enough courage to confide in the friendly superintendent, who had told me to report for duty the next morning.

I went to the hotel and saw at once that it \s would do no good to face the hard-boiled night clerk so making myself as inconspicuous as possible I watched my chances and when his back n as turned, I sneaked past the office and found an unoccupied room. I lost no time in getting to had, as it was a bitterly cold night-I did not dare think of next morning, the day of reckoning.

As I had insufficient bedding, I could not sleep, so in desperation I got up and raided a nearby room where I found needed blankets on the bed

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and appropriated them on the principle of "necessity knows no law." Two hours later I dimly heard a roar of profanity as my incoming neighbor discovered his loss but I was too sleepy to allow that to disturb me. At eight o'clock the next morning I walked past the day clerk with a boldness entirely assumed. The man gave me a glance of suspicion but did not question me. Arriving at the railroad office I found a job awaiting me and I made known the hotel episode.

"How old are you?" asked the superintendent.

"Seventeen," I answered.

"Not so bad," he said with a chuckle, then he gave me a letter to the hotel people which insured me a welcome breakfast as well as easement for the previous night's lodging.

My Wings Grow Stronger

I was now enrolled as "relief man" with his implied duties. Did any telegrapher or station agent need a vacation? The relief man took his place. My first job was the agency at Arroya, Colorado, where I arrived at eleven p. m., joyously greeted by the lonely man on

duty who had been long pining for a furlough. I found a little station house of about the size of a box car. A cot, a

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stove, a pile of coal and a small telegraph table filled the entire space. There was one house in the "town," this sheltered the section gang. The retiring agent bade me good night, mounted a horse and rode ten miles to a ranch, for now I would occupy the station bed. An hour after I had crawled in under the blankets I heard the most unearthly howls and wails as of lost souls. It was some time before I realized that the coyotes and the wolves had formed a reception committee and paid me a visit. That was my first experience of a wolf, at my door but not my last by any means!

It is difficult to imagine the utter loneliness of night duty at the isolated prairie stations of the old Kansas Pacific (now a part of the Union Pacific system) in the early eighties. At many of my stations there was not even a single domicile beside my little office, which was maintained for telegraphic train service and the water tank, rather than for revenue, of which there was practically none. It took a certain temperament to stand up under the strain of such isolation, so the employees had to have frequent vacations.

Virden Young was located several hundred miles east of Arroya where there were some settlements but the monotony broke down even his

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colossal nerve and at last one night I heard on the wire, after an hour of absolute silence, "I can't stand it any longer. Good bye!" No call, no signature, yet I recognized Young's telegraphic "handwriting" at once and knew that he had broken under the strain and was preparing to leave his post. Sure enough, he took the first train eastbound and I did not see him again for over thirty years. One day he walked into my St. Louis office as "Dr. S. Virden Young, Washington, D. C." Need I add that he is a nerve specialist?

I managed to get some fun out of my experience at Box Elder, Colorado, where there was both a day and a night telegrapher. We lived in a caboose set on a side track, I mean we slept there. So terribly cold was that winter, the thermometer going thirty-five degrees below zero, that I spent most of my time firing up the big non stove at night, keeping it red hot. Even then, my back was cold when I faced the stove! During the day, the agent was the fireman while I crawled under the feather - bed in the caboose and slept like a hibernating bear until five p. m. At that time the day man would waken me by shooting out a window light or two, until I yelled to him that I was getting up. You see, this gun

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play saved him the trouble of walking a hundred yards to call me.

At Kit Carson I had a really comfortable office and bed, making my home with the station agent and his family. The agent and I rigged up a sail on a hand - car and had many thrilling rides on the rails and narrow escapes from collisions. We always carried a gun and many times we would see herds of antelope along the track. It was easy to drive them with a gun, a bullet placed directly in front of the herd would turn them squarely round. We never killed any of these graceful natures, not even for food. We could have hot dozens of them but we agreed that they were too beautiful to be killed and I have always been glad that we got plenty of sport in just making them maneuver in their frightened efforts to escape. A herd of perhaps thirty antelope in full gallop is something to remember.

The tramp problem as well as that of transporting the poor was an immediate one in those days. When a poor family from the hinterland came in with insufficient funds to enable them to reach civilization, I would telegraph headquarters giving full particulars. Generally I would be authorized to give free transportation by means of a telegram reading: "This telegram, stamped and

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countersigned by you, will pass so and so." Many of the old boys will recognize this form.

It was much more difficult to dispose of the tramps who were unwelcome everywhere. Kit Carson was a one house and tank station where all the trains stopped and were "deloused" of tramps. It was a very uncomfortable sensation for me to see a group of desperate "bums" unloaded from the midnight train and having them peer longingly through my windows at the hot stove and the bright lights after the train had departed. I kept a big gun in plain sight on my desk in order to discourage any attempts at intimacy. All I could do for the vagrants was to direct them to the pump house, where they could sleep in the sawdust until morning. It was up to me to get them out of "town" for my own protection; but the trainmen were watchful and kept the tramps off as much as possible. Once aboard a train, they were sure of a fifty mile ride as it was that far to the next stop.

Upon one occasion when I had eight especially unwelcome "guests" on hand, fortune favored me. The morning train unloaded a dozen water barrels which were consigned to a ranchman and I immediately thought of the story of Ali Baba where the thieves were hidden in the big oil jars.

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I arranged with the tramps that night for each to let into a barrel and "lay low" until a signal handful of gravel notified them to climb aboard. The train duly arrived, the crew watchfully inspecting the station for tramps. They expressed gratification at finding none and returned to their quarters in the caboose. I engaged the conductor in conversation, and, just as he gave the signal for the train to go ahead, I hurled a handful of gravel among

the barrels, saw eight shadows silently emerge and climb onto the cars. I was rid of an unwelcome crew, glory be!

At the Railway Station

The first station agent at Boonville that I recall was Randolph and my memory of him is very vague. Those were the days when Austin Speed was the big boss of the Boonville Branch. Austin was a huge boy who never quite grew up. He had as many friends as there were passengers on the road and there was much regret when he was Superseded as conductor.

Milt Stahl was for many years in charge of the engine which supplied the motive power for the two daily trains. Milt used to stop the train any

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where along the road when the girls wanted to pick wild flowers. He was in no hurry - he had all the time there was.

Milton's old straw-burner gave him almost animal obedience. He could do pretty nearly anything with the engine - I used to think he could make it climb a tree.

The next station agent who impressed me was John C. Phelps, who was a thorough railroad man but had a stormy finish in Boonville. He had as assistant his brother, Mel, who married Mattie Boone, one of Boonville's fair daughters. A later addition to the force was Ed Jones, a relation by marriage, after whose advent came troublous times and the end of the Phelps regime.

After several men, who remained only a few months, came R. L. Moore, a home man, who was in charge of both Missouri Pacific and M. K. & T. stations. For unruffled calm under strenuous conditions, I never saw his superior. You simply could not excite him and I have seen mobs of excursionists at the ticket window howling for speedy action - Mr. Moore would go right on in the even tenor of his way and no one ever missed a train.

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My own agency came when the M. K. & T. separated from the Missouri Pacific. I had worked up from night operator under Mr. Moore and was logically the man to take charge when she Katy set up housekeeping on its own account. I had my medical books at the office, preparing myself for college and never had an idle hour. I drust say I enjoyed railroad work and my business relations with the people.

C, J, McCleverty succeeded me in 1890 and gave efficient service for many years, being relieved by the present popular agent, Mr. T. F. Waltz, whom I had the pleasure of meeting for she first time last year, and who holds the record f or long tenure of office.

I wonder if the new bridge will have as efficient, faithful caretakers as did the old one in the persons of Will Kirten and George Jacobs, with their records of thirty and forty years. Had wither of these admirable men a single enemy? I cannot imagine it.

Do you remember Mr. and Mrs. Harry McGowan who had the little restaurant near the Katy station? The thousands of railroad men

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who took refreshments there always spoke well of the McGowans.

I never could get along with the senior Jesse Mitchell, teamster, who hauled freight to and from the Katy station. What a cantankerous fellow I must have been!

Now his brother Jim, he of the black beard, I never had any trouble with him. I suppose he was a more patient man.

The Happy Family

We were a happy family at the old Katy station where I had such loyal helpers. There was Joe Tuttle, the baggage master. You simply could not give Joe enough work to do. He always came back for more. C. J. McCleverty was night operator. He often came on duty an hour ahead of time and it seemed a pleasure to him to relieve me of some harassing piece of work. We had twelve hour shifts in those days.

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Henry J. Otten was the telegraph operator and many a willing service, never counting extra time or extra work. Henry was always keen to learn. He actually enjoyed the acquisition and use of a new word - English or Latin as some folks enjoy a good cigar, rolling it over and over on his tongue. Henry later became a first class train dispatcher.

Black-whiskered Tim Sanders was the section foreman and after him came Tim Foley. Both of these men were my devoted friends. Always they asked, "Can't we do something for you today?" meaning the entire section crew. We always liked to have Tony Back on the section. He was such a faithful worker. You remember those flower beds we had, east of the station - Tony always helped to keep them in order. They were a novelty in those days. These section people were humble folks, but I prized their friendship.

The Meierhoffers! Meierhoffer (pere) was a cooper who made the most wonderful barrels imaginable. His cooperage works were just a few yards outside

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the free delivery zone for telegrams and, in consequence, the messenger was paid twenty cents for each delivery made. Can't you imagine the competition among Hazell's cubs at the telegraph office?

One day, I think it must have been April first, there was a plot laid by Ed Spahr, who was the official messenger and head "criminal" of the office, together with one or two other students, to have a telegram ready addressed to Meierhoffer's and left as bait on my arrival, while they remained out of sight.

I swallowed the bait all right, not bothering to look up Ed to remind him of his duty, and thinking only of the importance of the delivery of that telegram, I made a wild run to deliver it. Slow smiling Frank Meierhoffer opened the telegram, snickered and handed it to me. I read the urgent message: "Mr. Meierhoffer, please lick this boy with a barrel stave!"

The hookworm could never catch up with Charles Meierhoffer, the one of the family whom I knew best through constant business association at the railway station. We often had great trouble in getting cars in which to load barrels for apple packers during the season and to prevent loss, we had to resort to almost anything

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short of murder in order to secure rolling stock. One day, after we had been begging and praying for two cars to load for H. T. Kingsbury, of Estill, we were turned down cold. "None to spare!" But I knew there were two empties destined for a more favored shipper farther north, coming on a train soon due. Getting in touch with Chas. Meierhoffer, I told him I would hold the train by subterfuge twenty minutes and that there were two empty cattle cars on the train.

Charles was wise, so a word was sufficient. He got his whole force at work and when the train came in, he put a huge load of barrels on each side of the cars, while I entertained the crew in the station. Before the twenty minutes time was up, both cars were loaded to the guards with barrels and the doors sealed. Just before starting the conductor walked up and down, inspecting his train. He stopped at the two loaded cars in astonishment. "Where the hell did I get those two car loads of barrels?" I heard him ask, and innocently asked him if I should telegraph for information. "Yes, find out where they are to go - I have no record. I could have sworn those cars were empty when I got here."

"Must be magic," I replied, "but I'll find out and wire you at Franklin." So he went on and

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sure enough at Franklin he got my message. "Drop the cars at Estill. Will mail way-bills to the agent there." Well, it was months before I heard the last of that affair, but we had favored two friends, the railroad wasn't out anything, and the live stock shipper delayed but one train.

Love Me, Love My Dog

I wonder if you can stand a little story of Mother Huber, who is boss of the club house where I stay at my fishing station, Jerome on the Gasconade? First I'll tell you that Mrs. Huber is a woman of strong character, one who has had to fight her way and who has had little experience with the softer side of life. Her job calls for firmness at all times and if you think she is not mistress of any possible eventuality just start something.

When I arrive in Jerome this is how the formidable hostess greets me. "God bless you, doctor darling, I was never so glad to see you in my life. Why the hell didn't you bring Starlight (Mrs. Paillou) you selfish devil?" Then she shamelessly embraces me. You perceive, she is a reader of character!

Well, here is the story. Mother Huber had

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two dogs which she adored. One day while looking out of the kitchen window she saw a huge fellow kick one of her pets. She grabbed a skillet and in a half minute the man was facing a raging fury. "You kicked my doggie, you blankety blanked blank!!" "Yes, he growled at me-I don't like dogs." "Oh, you don't? and dogs don't like you which shows they've got good judgment! For two cents I'd smash your face with this skillet- say Mister, you may not know it but you are going in on the next train, not another damn biscuit do you eat in my house!"

The crestfallen fisherman, recognizing an ultimatum when he heard one, went to pack his trunk with the help of Mr. Huber, who is a kindly sympathetic host, to whom he told the story. "She said she would smash my face with a skillet!" "Did she say that?" asked Pop Huber in a surprised tone. "She certainly did." "Well, by golly, you're a lucky man." "Lucky? How do you make that out?" "Because it's a wonder she didn't do it, that's howl"

Schoolmates

Mrs. Victoria C. Whitney, whom we knew as that wonderfully good teacher, Miss Vic Conkling,

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married during her middle age. She was proud of her youthful appearance and justly so. I recall meeting Mrs. Whitney at some social function in St. Louis where she introduced me to some of her friends.

I noticed a look of apprehension on her face and sensed her fear that I was going to say the usual thing about having been her pupil, thus betraying her seniority. "You have

known Mrs. Whitney long?" asked my new acquaintance after the introduction, "Oh yes," I replied, "Mrs. Whitney and I went to school together!"

The look of delighted relief on Mrs. Whitney's countenance amply repaid me and I did not need her fervent aside: "God bless you, Emile, and every courtly Frenchman that ever lived!"

Lagniappe

No doubt one of the favorite stores of your childhood was that of Walz and Brenneisen, where children were always made welcome by the courtly Brenneisen or by the lovable Mr. Walz. This was the first store in Boonville, so far as I know, that gave the children "lagniappe," as it is called in New Orleans - a bit of candy with each purchase,

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Do you recall how eagerly you complied with the parental request to make a trip to this store? You even took back unsatisfactory merchandise with the minimum of growling! That "taking back" was such a bugaboo, at most stores you so often got a "dirty look."

Mr. Walz always tendered me the jar of candy and I, repressing my desires by almost superhuman effort, took just one stick. And wasn't I the proud boy when Mr. Walz told my father that I was the only boy whom he could trust with the jar! After that, I even took the shortest sick of candy, so eager are children to live up to expectations.

I remember how astounded I was when Mr. Brenneisen spoke to me in French - I thought no one in the world spoke that tongue outside of my own family!

Dr. George A. Russell

Many of you know that Dr. Russell counts me n one of his best friends, but none of you know how it started. The doctor himself may have forgotten, very likely wants to forget but, lest he forget, here it is-upon an occasion I washed his feet!

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Fact. Took a pail of water, cake of soap an` everything. Did a good job too, although I don't suppose it has lasted-probably has been done since, several times, as that was in 1889.

I was studying medicine in those days, am still doing it, but then it was under Drs. Burger & Russell, and one day poor Dr. Russell - who was a miserable, lonely, neglected, helpless but not hopeless bachelor, "took sick" in a furnished room which he, for euphony's sake, called his home.

I happened in, "seen my duty and I done it" gave him a hot foot-bath and put him to bed. I think Dr. Russell never quite got over that part of it, so you see what a serious affair a foot-bath can be!

N. B. Dr. Russell drew my fire by commenting upon my sketches - fortunately for him his comments were favorable.

Would Be Lion

The last two years of my railroading was made more strenuous by Supt. W. B. Lyon, who was well-known in Boonville. Mr. Lyon came up from the ranks and earned his job by roughneck tactics in dealing with strikers and, as his was a one track mind, he never changed his methods. This made for constant friction with people of culture.

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My office was about the most desirable on the line and I suspected Lyon of trying to "raw-hide" me out of it; but as the job was vital to my objective (sufficient funds for college) I held on like grim death. The contest was unequal - I had to fight with diplomacy and many times did I examine my bank book to see if I had enough funds to warrant my resignation! As the time grew nearer, I could not resist the temptation, by veiled sarcasm and irony, to make him rage and roar like his namesake.

In after years, I met Mr. Lyon as man to man and found him almost human. Indeed, I was amazed to learn that not only had my services been satisfactory but that I was being considered for an executive position at the time of my resignation. You never can tell!

The Stovepipe Brigade

Does any one now wear a silk "stovepipe" hat in Boonville? We used to have quite a brigade of them. There was Harvey Bunce, would he have looked natural without his shining tile, driving

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to and from the bank in his spring buggy? Uncle Louis Stahl's was a part of himself as he walked the blocks between his home and the Advertiser office. Frank Caldwell wore his frequently but not so persistently.

Who can think of Capt. Baird without his eternal stovepipe? It was said that he even went to bed with it on. And Capt. Howard, who never missed coming to the telegraph office daily at 10 o'clock to regulate his watch. That was an important event in his life, keeping his time to the second. Poor old O'Donnell's mind wouldn't track at all until he put on his tall hat, that seemed to start the wheels - but they turned backwards half the time anyway.

Judge T. M. Rice was also an addict, when the judge put aside his hat to make a speech you knew you were in for it and if you were a wise boy you "beat it." Col. John O'Bryan always affected the "plug" hat and looked well in it, as did Capt. Brooks and Mr. Racke, father of Cecilia, that brainy girl who is now a physician in Los Angeles.

Dr. Wm. H. Trigg could not have carried his dignity so well under any other than the beautiful top piece that graced his white hairs. The Rev. C. H. Briggs was resplendent in the clerical silk

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cylinder, he even played croquet wearing that hat - fawncy!

Dr. McClanahan was inseparable from the headgear of ceremony as was Dr. Miles, the elder, Dr. Burger and Dr. Wade How The Hayes and Wheeler campaign brought on an epidemic of what I would call "plug hats" in contradistinction to the real silk hats. They were regulation for torchlight procession wear.

The tall hat of ceremony is generally considered ridiculous in these days of sans gene, but there was something superb in its dignity on the right individual. It is not given to every man to wear it successfully, nevertheless there is nothing that gives quite the air that does this chapeau of quality.

Two Heroines

High on the list of Boonville's heroic women I would place Mrs. Victoria Garthoffner, who was left a widow with eight small children, one of them a victim of infantile paralysis. Imagine, if you can, that little woman shouldering the burden which would crush any ordinary individual, doing it cheerfully and with no self pity!

Well, if she had hesitated or given way to any

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introspection, she would indeed have been lost.

But Mrs. Garthoffner did not know that it was impossible to rear that family with her slender means, two hands and only nineteen possible working hours a day and, not knowing it was impossible, she went ahead and did it!

We have all seen the result - healthy, wholesome daughters and sturdy sons, all successful in a business way, good citizens and a credit to the community.

Mrs. Garthoffner lived to see the fruition of her labors and she told me that no one could have better children or more filial ones, for she had every comfort in her declining years.

Can't you imagine her children burning a candle under the portrait of their wonderful mother?

And there was another widow, more under my immediate observation, in fact our next door neighbor: Mrs. Julia Sawtelle. Bereaved by a terrible accident she was left with an invalid father and three small children to be supported by her needle! Many times I have seen a light burning in her house and heard the hum of her sewing machine, hours past midnight.

Mrs. Sawtelle could have sung a Song of the Shirt more lugubrious than that of the poet Hood

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but her heavy tasks and sense of humor left her no space for repining, so she bent over her work with smiling mien and an optimism that won the admiration of all who knew her.

She, also, lived to see her little family well established before she was called away and her memory is cherished by two good daughters and several grandchildren.

Capt. Spahr and Sitting Bull

One of the early settlers of Boonville was David Spahr, who established the tobacco factory that made the famous, but deceptive, "Peach juice," which was the favorite "eating" tobacco of my boyhood days. He was succeeded by Spahr Bros. & Brewster and they in turn by John N. Gott & Son. The Spahr Bros. started a factory in St. Louis during the civil war and this was absorbed by Liggett & Myers.

A. J. Spahr was foreman of the St. Louis house and when it was taken over he took to the - river, where he remained for fifty years, forty of them as captain of a steamboat. Capt. Spahr was a large, powerful and very active man. His run extended from St. Louis to Ft. Benton, Montana and he spent most of his winters in Boonville

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when the river was ice-bound. He must have written interesting letters during his voyages and told many lively tales to his cronies around the winter stove. His adventurous life must hold rich material for song and story available to the historian. Capt. Spahr died two years ago, so the matter would be fresh and easily verified.

Only one incident has reached my ears. It seems that Capt. Spahr's boat carried soldiers and their officers to and from Ft. Benton. One of the most frequent passengers was what we now call a bachelor maid, a mature lady, still on the hopeful side of fifty, who backed her hope with such fierce determination that her legitimate objectives so far forgot

themselves as to term her a nightmare- which is at least feminine - and a pest, which was unkind.

After many "sorties, skirmishes, excursions and alarms," as the old chroniclers would say, the officers put up a job on the wishful lady and agreed one and all to propose on the same date, which they did to the number of twenty-one. The canny maiden, anticipating our modern slogan, "Safety First," accepted every single son-of-a-gun, as soldiers may be appropriately termed.

A few days after arrival at Ft. Benton twenty of the officers had to take the field against Sitting

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Bull, who had started one of his periodical high jinks. History records that the twenty never returned, having fallen under the bullets and tomahawks of the savages. The officer who was left in command at the fort escaped with his life but lost his liberty, being held to his engagement. It was said by certain hard boiled old bachelors that he was wont to envy the fate of his comrades, but that was probably on house-cleaning days.

Sitting Bull, by the way, was finally starved out and carried into captivity on Capt. Spahr's boat. The untutored savage was a wily old rascal, so he submitted to tutoring enough to enable him to write his autograph, which he sold to the curious on the long journey. Great crowds met the steamer at every landing and Mr. S. Bull constantly raised his fee until he got as much as five dollars, but this was probably when he was posing as medicine man and signing prescriptions for that famous Indian remedy known as Spiritus Frumenti.

Copernicus, Jr.

Did you have your own ideas about astronomy, as a very young child? I thought the sun arose

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as a huge ball of fire, but at about ten o'clock, God exploded it into millions of those white and gold clouds that spread all over the firmament so as to warm and light all space, and when evening came, he swept them all together with a gigantic broom and rolled them into the fiery ball that we see at sunset. Then, naturally, it got dark.

When these pieces of the sun were not white or golden, but black clouds, I thought they were dirty and that God used so much water to wash them that it leaked down and made our rain. The moon, I thought, was a round piece of the sun that got away from God. It hid during the day, but at night when He wasn't looking, it came out and just ran from one end of the heavens to the other. The stars were just splinters of the exploded sun that got stuck in the heavens and looked so beautiful that God said: "Just let them stay there!"

Dr. Charles Swap

Charlie Swap was "Old Swap" from his cradle. When he and Will Manger locked horns in debates at school, the winner was sure he had lost both were casualties.

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Dr. Swap is a contradiction. He is full of brains and also runs to beef. He has a huge body but a dainty mind. You perhaps know that the liver is the largest organ in the human body?

Not in Swap's body-his heart is twice as big. You think Charles Swap is just a doctor of dental surgery, don't you? Well he thinks so too, but you are all wrong. Charlie Swap is an artist and a poet-a mute, inglorious Milton.

In that far time when Jove called unto high Olympus all the artisans and other workers of the world, in order that he might bestow upon each his needed gift, the Poet came late-for he had lingered by the way to admire the trees and flowers, to watch the clouds and listen to the singing birds.

And do you know what Jove said to this, his tardy child? He said: "My son, all is given, but this will I grant: You, of all mortals, may come to see me whenever you so desire!" And Dr. Swap avails himself of this privilege.

P. S. Perhaps the doctor will object to being thus exposed. Well, it serves him right - he has ignored my sketches. I'll stand for anything but drat silence which betokens contempt!

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Those Good Looking Thompsons

Have you forgotten Thompson's Grocery? I think not, with the Thompson boys to aid your memory. There was Henry, Kelly, Ed and Jim. I have lost track of all of these boys, but I understand that Ed is in Los Angeles and has been homesick for Boonville something like forty years. Henry was an especially handsome fellow although all of the family were good looking.

But what brought the Thompson store to the surface in my mind was some rather reckless shopping done there by Tyler Brant and myself at one time. We entered the store and waited quite patiently until we got Henry to wait on us. Then Tyler asked for one dollar's worth of gingersnaps, ditto of citron and raisins. "Charge it to Tallie," he said to Henry.

When we got outside I expressed my astonishment at the liberality of his purchases and at his temerity in charging them. "Oh, that's all right, he is sweet on sister Tallie - he won't send her a bill" answered my wise young friend.

The Circus in Boonville

The early circuses traveled on their own wheels, no luxurious trains brought in the outfit,

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and when the animal wagons sank deep in the mud there was always power enough under the elephant's skin to pull them out. A day's journey over country roads was not an unmixed pleasure trip for those concerned.

But when they arrived on "the common" that great space bounded by Swap's and Mitchell's on the north, Williams' on the east, Windsor's on the west and High street south-there was a ready crew of small boys to clean those heavenly chariots, run errands for circus folks and follow the elephants to the river. It wasn't every stopping place that afforded such a bathing beach for these enormous pachyderms-and how they enjoyed it!

There was Robinson's Circus, W. W. Cole's, W. C. Coupe's, Adam Forepaugh's and lesser aggregations whose names have faded from memory. Most of these survived the road and became railway shows, with several elephants and a steam "Cal-y-ope" to enhance the already irresistible lure.

"Irresistible" is right! A ticket of admission if possible, but admission at all hazards. To the credit of rough men be it told, I never heard of any brutality towards the boys who "sneaked in" under the canvas.

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I recall one negro family, which drove in a wagon ten miles to see the circus. They had no money but they brought along the family cook stove, which they sold for enough to give the big family one glorious day!

A Master Potter

You remember Mr. Weyrich, with those near sighted eyes peering through thick glasses? He made flower pots so beautiful that it seemed a pity to put common earth into them. It was only when the plants bloomed that you felt right about it.

William Manger

One of my outstanding classmates of the early days, was William Manger, who even then had the leonine aspects of Senator Borah. I always felt safe when Will was on my side

either playing or fighting and it seemed all the same to him, playing or fighting, he enjoyed, both.

When we had school "debates," William used pile-driver tactics and he would overwhelm mild, logical arguments with sophistries just by the sheer charging force he put behind them. He was

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always so earnest, as he thundered away, shaking his black mane as if daring you to contradict him! But it was not alone with sophistries that he gained his points. He could use cold logic when it was available. What a lawyer he would have made!

I saw William Manger a few years ago. He is a suave, well poised, successful man of the world now, but there is still something in his eye that tells you what would happen if the right hat were dropped!

The Two Stegner Boys

Edward and Emil-there was always something doing when they were about. Ed was a scrapper clear through and I remember one day principal Rider came to our schoolroom, took Edward across his knee and administered sundry strokes of the paddle to his gluteal region.

Afterwards when Ed told me what he was going to do to Mr. Rider, it made me feel sorry for our principal!

Emil was much milder in disposition. He studied pharmacy when he grew up and had a drug store in St. Louis. I passed his store a thousand times on the cars, always intending to

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stop in and greet my old boy friend, but always I was in a hurry-one day when I made a pilgrimage to Bellefontaine Cemetery, I called on my friend Emil Stegner and left him a flower - I wonder if he knew!

Did you play "Andy Over" with little "Heavy" Lee on the commons? We called him "Heavy" because he was heavy - as a feather. Well "Heavy" Lee took his big, curly white head to Texas and grew up to it, physically and commercially. He died two years ago, did Bob Lee. Ah, they die, do our old boy friends, they die!

Was there ever a more locally famous baseball club than the "Spring Chickens!" Bert Harrison and Jim Wilson were members of this club. Bert had a cruel streak in him, as do often those of superabundant vitality; but he earned my gratitude one wintry day by

refraining from stunning me with icy snowballs, hard as rocks, with which he and Jim Wilson held the corner near my home. Everybody else had to detour.

Hugo Miller

A quiet, studious, even-tempered boy was

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Hugo Miller. Never knew him to fight, yet we all respected him. Hugo always got his "examples" right and he didn't object if you copied them.

John Walz

John was a fine student and a good friend. No matter what happened, John Walz smiled through it and he had and has such a winning smile! No wonder he was made Mayor of Boonville. I'm surprised he didn't ask for the Governorship could have had it just as well. John has perennial youth. No wonder he smiles!

Veit Eppstein

He was a dreamer of dreams who kept his feet on the ground, even when his head was above the clouds - that's why he was a successful man of affairs. Veit was reared in an ideal, cultured home - with half a dozen charming sisters who never succeeded in spoiling him. What a delightful grandfather he is going to make!

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Joe Clark, Artist

I'll wager Joe Clark makes an ideal citizen everybody liked him. Once I wanted a painting of an owl and we could not find a picture to serve as a model, so Joe just went ahead and created an owl with his paints and brushes - did wonderfully well too. This picture I left hanging in the railway station in 1890.

Ben Hutchison

We all remember when Ben Hutchison returned from Annapolis in midshipmen's uniform of pure white with gold shoulder straps and jaunty cap. The older doctors will recall the epidemic of cardiac palpitation among the young ladies of Boonville - all of it traced to Ben's advent.

Well, he is now Rear Admiral Benj. F. Hutchison, U. S. N., and if you think that is not "going some" you have several thinks coming to you. Really, we poor land-lubbers cannot realize what it means to be an Admiral unless we travel abroad or have some business with the Navy.

I had occasion to communicate with Admiral Hutchison recently, and his reply was just what you would expect, it was from Ben to Emile -

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rank and the forty years since our last meeting disappeared in friendliness. Our Navy does not spoil men-that is why we love it.

Picking on C. C.

Did you think that C. C. Bell was the first apple man in Boonville? Nay, nay - Hood and Co., were apple packers when Charlie Bell was just parking apples - in his stomach.

Richard the Lion Hearted

Suppose that you were an artist, with all that the word implies. A love of the beautiful - the green grass, the golden grain, the colorful birds, the fantastic clouds, the rugged hills, the glorious sunsets, the level plains, the flowing river, the yellow moon, the glimmering stars-all these you could see by just opening those folding doors we call our eyelids, and then Suppose that through no fault of your own you saw all of these divinely beautiful things and also the faces of your loved ones grow dimmer month by month, and that your eyes burned like coals of fire night and day. Suppose that, in spite of all that the greatest skill could do, you saw darkness

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closing in upon you inexorably and that, finally, fate slipped the black cap of blindness over your eyes.

Would you have continued in business, remained cheerful, amiable, uncomplaining?

Dick Harrison is an artist with all that the word implies. He loves the beautiful. He saw it all slip away from him slowly but inexorably. You all know how he took the bludgeoning of fate that his head though bloody is unbowed-that he remains "the Captain of his soul!"

Chay Houx

Chay Houx! That name makes you smile broadly if you are an old timer and attended theatricals at the old Thespian Hall in the eighties. Was there ever heard such ribald laughter since the time of Gargantua himself?

"Ow! Haw! Haw! Haw! Oo-o-o-o--h! Har! Har! Har!" In gusts, in bursts, in avalanches of joyous abandon from the great original "clacque solitaire" of Boonville, for there was only one Chay Houx and no theatrical performance was a complete success without him and none a total failure with this "colored man and brother" present.

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You could read amazement on the actor's face at the outburst of Houx's applause. He seemed to say to himself, "Is it possible that I am that funny?" and always the laughter broke out in gales at the laughter, and with every one following the laughing jackass, it was easy to see that «a pleasant time was had by all."

If Chay was immured during an engagement calling especially for his professional attainments, then some hasty compromise must be made with authority and fines liquidated to the end that this artist could join forces with visiting comedians for our entertainment.

I wonder where this stentorian laughter is today? Wherever he is, I hope he is still laughing and has grown exceeding fat withal.

Now It May Be Told!

The celebrated Maxwell-Preller case had an echo in Boonville. You will recall that Maxwell murdered Preller and put his body in a trunk with an inscription on his breast reading, "Thus Perish all Enemies of the Great Cause!" A ruse, of course, to put suspicion upon political assassins.

We had our trunk mystery between Boonville and Sedalia, which the statute of limitations now

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permits to be solved. A trunk checked from Boonville arrived in Sedalia and remained a week uncalled for. The baggage master in moving the trunk noticed a pool of blood in which it had been standing and a horrible odor emanating therefrom.

The Maxwell-Preller affair had put us all on the qui vive, so the Sedalia coroner, sheriff, detectives and police were called upon to open the mysterious murder trunk. Surrounded by a crowd of reporters and citizens, the trunk lid was pried open, and on top of the inclosed corpse was pinned a placard; "Thus Perish All Enemies of the Great Cause!"

The brave officers, holding their breaths as well as their noses, unwrapped the dreadful object and finally disclosed-the decomposing corpse of a huge dog! You may be sure that the Sedalia Bazoo of that day did the event full justice.

While night operator at the M. K. & T. station, I had been greatly annoyed by a dog belonging to a fellow nearby who resented my efforts to drive the animal away, and as he had the inclination and physical strength to back his resentment, I had to resort to craft to attain my objective, so I lured the vicious dog into the freight

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