

deserve; but 'tain't any of my doin's, an' men that ort to know keep tellin' me that I'm doin' a lot of good in town. Once in a while, though, somebody laughs at me—laughs at somethin' I say. It's been hurtin' me, an' I told Judge Prency so the other day, but he said, 'Sam, it isn't what you say, but the way you say it.' You see, I never had no eddication; I was sent to school, but I played hookey most of the time."

"Did you, though?" asked Tom, with some inflexions that caused the cobbler to look up in time to see that his son was looking at him admiringly—there could be no doubt about it. Sam had never been looked at that way before by his big boy, and the consequence was an entirely new and pleasurable sensation. After thinking it over a moment, he replied:

"Yes, I did, an' any fun that was to be found I looked after in them days. I don't mind tellin' you that I don't think I found enough to pay for the trouble; but things was as they was. Now I wish I'd done different; but it's too late to get back what I missed by dodgin' lessons. Tom, if I could talk better 'twould be a good thing for me, but I ain't got no time to go to school. You've been to school a lot; why can't you come to the shop with me, and sit down, and tell me where an' how I don't talk like other folks?"

Tom indulged in a long and convulsive chuckle.

"When you've done laughin' at your father, Tom," continued Sam, "he'll be glad to have you say somethin' that'll show him that you ain't as mean an' low down as some folks think you be."

"I ain't no school-teacher," said Tom, "an' I ain't learned no fancy ways of talkin'."

"I don't expect you to tell me more'n you know," said the parent, "but if you've got the same flesh and blood as me, you'll stand by me when I'm bothered. The puppies of a dog would do that much for their dad if he got in trouble."

Tom did not answer; he sulked a little while, but finally entered the shop with his father, and sat down, searched his mind a few moments, and then recalled and repeated the two injunctions which his last teacher had most persistently urged upon her pupils—that they should not drop letters from the ends of words, nor say "ain't" or "hain't." Then Sam devoted himself to practice, by talking aloud, and Tom became so amused by the changes in his father's intonation that he finally was obliged to go home and tell his mother and Mary.

"Stop that—right away!" exclaimed Mrs. Kimper, as soon as Tom got fairly into his story. "Your father ain't goin' to be laughed at in his own house by his own family, while I'm around to stand up for him."

"Oh, stuff!" exclaimed Tom, in amazement. Then he laughed as he reverted to his father's efforts at correct pronunciation, and continued his story. Suddenly he was startled by seeing his mother snatch a stump of a fire-shovel from the hearth, and brandish it over his head.