

of elevations dotted with handsome residences and embowered by gardens, with the hills and the uplands beyond, as well as the highway or "river road," threading along in and out of sight among the tree-covered bluffs; while, facing about, you will see the river moving peacefully along, until lost in the valleys and their forests below.

The town rests there on the banks of this beautiful stream, and between the guardian hills upon either side, like twin nests where there is always song and gladness.

In the time of which I write, however, all this was different; that is, the town was different. The river ran down like a silvery ribbon from among the islands just the same; the splendid hills were all there, crowned with fine forests as they are now; but the town itself did not contain probably over three hundred inhabitants all told, the business portion only consisting of a few country stores, a post-office, a blacksmith-shop or two, a mill, and two small taverns able to accommodate a few travellers at a time, but chiefly depending for their support upon the custom of the farmers who straggled into the village on rainy days, "election time," or any other of the hundred-and-one occasions which mark out events in the lives of back-country people.

There was then one rough bridge across the river, built of oaken beams and rude planks, in a cheap, common fashion; and at either end of this were clustered, each side of the street, all the stores and shops of the place, save one.

That shop was my own; for there I both lived and laboured, the "Only and Original Cooper of Dundee."

This shop was the farthest of any from the business centre of the village, and stood just back of, and facing, the main highway, upon the crest of a fine hill, about three hundred yards distant from the bridge. It was my home and my shop.

I had straggled out here a few years before, and by industry and saving had gradually worked into a comfortable business at my cooper's trade, and now employed eight men. I felt proud of my success because I owed no man, had a cheery little home, and for the early days, when it was pretty hard to get along at all, I was making a comfortable living.

My cooper-shop and house were one building—a long, one-story frame building with a pleasant garden about, some fine