

bringings of wealth. And if there be hesitancy on my part—poor old foolish fellow that I am—to speak of the poverty which haunted the little log house in the forest, in which I was born, what gall and wormwood, you may well say, must it have been to me when I was being forced during the first twenty years of my life to count the social forces against which it was mine to contend, as I fought my way from the common school to the academy, and from the academy to a school of my own, with competitors whose parents were, to a greater or less extent, able to provide for them. The struggle of these early days has now lost nearly all of its bitterness to me, nay, has become sweet in some of my poetic moments. Still, even at this late day, I cannot but wish sometimes, when the dollar-and-cent spirit of some of my neighbours crowds about me, and social distinctions are being whispered in my ear, that my early home had been other than a shanty in the wilderness. Such a feeling, which, as you no doubt will say, is anything but creditable to me, soon wears away, however of itself, without any drain upon a philosophy higher than that which provoked it, and is readily supplanted by some verse or other of my own composing, sweetened with the fragrance of forest life and bygone days. Indeed when I contemplate how many of these early competitors of mine at school and college have fallen away from the faith that lies at the bottom of all true manhood, have descended even to a lower estate than the one in which I was born—the estate of worldly-mindedness and mere money-grubbing,—I am not unfrequently forced upon my knees to thank God—pharisaical as it may seem to some—that from the nature of my upbringing it was rendered impossible for me to become as some of these “other men are.”

Yes, gentle reader, my mother was the best of women, as most mothers are. I am an old man now, and in many respects very egotistical, but all the pride in my own achievements vanishes when I think what that most sainted of women did for me and the rest of us at home. There were seven of us in all, born and brought up in the forest clearing, and the heroism of her life is a poem in itself to those of us who survive her. Seldom did her cheerfulness of spirit desert her, as she strove to make ends meet. All her wordly expectations centred in her children; and if it be permitted to those who have “passed on before” to witness the