

that board? Whoever drove that nail should have had a gimlet to bore a hole; but having none he has spoiled the looks of the whole job. So it is with everything when a farmer undertakes any work without proper tools. Spoiling it is quite as bad as letting it alone.

"Now come out into the yard," continued the old man, "and let us see what jobs there are yet to do."

He led the way to the wood-shed. There was an axe with only half a handle; Tony knew it well, for he had chopped many a stick with the crippled tool. Uncle Benny pointed to it with the screw-driver that he still carried in his hand, but said nothing, as he observed that Tony seemed confounded at being so immediately brought face to face with what he knew should have been done six months before. Turning round, but not moving a step, he again pointed with the screw-driver to the wooden gutter which once caught the rain-water from the shed-roof and discharged it into a hog-head near by. The brackets from one end of the gutter had rotted off and it hung down on the pig-pen fence, discharging into the pen in a ead of into the hog-head. The latter had lost its lower hoops; they were rusting on the ground, fairly grown over with grass. The old man pointed at each in turn; and looking into Tony's face, found that he had crammed his hands into his pockets, and was beginning to smile, but said nothing. Just turning about, he again pointed to where a board had fallen from the further end of the shed, leaving an opening into the pig-pen beyond. While both were looking at the open place, three well-grown pigs hearing somebody in the shed, rose upon their hinder feet, and thrust their muddy faces into view, thinking that something good was coming. The old man continued silent, looked at the pigs, and then at Tony. Tony was evidently confused, and worked his hands about in his pockets, but never looked into the old man's face. It was almost too much for him.

"Come," said Uncle Benny, "let us try another place," and as they were moving off, Tony stumbled over a new iron-bound maul, which lay on the ground, the handle having been broken short off in its socket.

"How the jobs turn up!" observed Uncle Benny. "How many have we here?"

"I should say about five," replied Tony.

"Yes," added the old man, "and all within sight of each other."

As they approached the hog-pen, they encountered a strong smell, and there was a prodigious running and tumbling among the animals. They looked over the shabby fence that formed the pen.

"Any jobs here, Tony?" inquired Uncle Benny.

Tony made no answer, but looked around to see if the old man kept his screw-driver, half hoping that, if he found anything to point at, he would have nothing to point with. But raising the tool, he poised it in the direction of the feeding-trough. Tony could not avert his eyes, but, directing them towards the spot at which the old man pointed, he discovered a hole in the bottom of the trough, through which nearly half of every feeding must have leaked out into the ground underneath. He had never noticed it until now.

"There's another job for you, Tony," he said. "There's not only neglect, but waste. The more hogs a man keeps in this way, the more money he will lose. Look at the condition of this pen—All mud, not a dry spot for the pigs to fly to. Even the sheds under which they are to sleep are three inches deep in slush."

"But I thought pigs did best when they had plenty of dirt about them, they like it so," replied Tony.

"You are mistaken, Tony," rejoined Uncle Benny. "A pig is by nature a cleanly animal; it is only the way in which some people keep him that makes him a filthy one. Give him the means to keep himself clean, and he will be clean always—a dry shed with dry litter to sleep in, and a pen where he can keep out of the mud when he wants to, and he will never be dirty, while what he eats will stick to his ribs. These pigs can't grow in this condition. Then look at the waste of manure! Why, there are those thirty odd loads of cornstalks, and a great pile of sweet-potato vines, that Mr. Spangler has in his field, all which he says he is going to burn out of the way, as soon as they get dry enough. They should be brought here and put in this mud and water, to absorb the liquid manure that is now soaking into the ground, or evaporating before the sun. This liquor is the best part of the manure, its heart and life; for nothing can be called food for plants until it is

brought into a liquid condition.

"Now, Tony," he continued, "you can't do anything profitable or useful in this world without some trouble; and as you are to be a farmer, the sooner you learn this lesson, the more easily you will get along. But who is to do that job of putting a stopper over this hole in the trough, you or I?"

"I'll do it to-morrow, Uncle Benny," replied Tony.

"To-morrow? To-morrow won't do for me. A job that needs doing as bad as this, should be done at once; its one thing less to think of, don't you know that? Besides didn't you want to do some jobs?" rejoined Uncle Benny.

Tony had never been accustomed to this way of hurrying up things; but he felt himself fairly cornered. He didn't care much about the dirt in the trough; it was the unusual promptness of the demand that staggered him.

"Run to the house and ask Mrs. Spangler to give you an old tin cup or kettle—anything to make a patch big enough to cover this hole," said Uncle Benny; "and bring that hammer and a dozen lath-nails you'll find in my tool-chest."

Tony did as he was directed, and brought back a quart mug with a small hole in the bottom which a single drop of solder would have made tight as ever.

"I guess the swill is worth more to the hogs than ever a new mug would be, Tony," said Uncle Benny, holding up the mug to the sun, to see how small a defect had condemned it. Then, knocking out the bottom and straightening it with his hammer on the post, he told Tony to step over the fence into the trough. It was not a very nice place to get into, but over he went; and the nails and hammer, being handed to him, he covered the hole with the tin put in the nails round the edge, hammered the edge flat, and in ten minutes all was done.

"There, Tony, is a six months' leak stopped in ten minutes. Nothing like the present time—will you remember that? Never put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day. Now run back with the hammer and those two nails, and put this remnant of the tin cup in my chest; you'll want it for something one of those days. Always save the pieces, Tony."

This survey of Mr. Spangler's premises was continued by Uncle Benny and Tony until the latter began to change his opinion about the farmer doing up the odd jobs so thoroughly that none would be left for him. He saw there was enough for both of them. The old man pointed out a great many that he had never even noticed; but when his attention was called to them, he saw the necessity of having them done. Indeed, he had a notion that everything about the place wanted fixing up. Besides, Uncle Benny took pains to explain the reasons why such and such things were required, answering the boy's numerous questions, and imparting to him a knowledge of farm wants and farm processes, of which no one had ever spoken to him.

He used to say, that boys do only what they see the men do—that all they learned was by imitation. They had no opportunity allowed them while at home of testing their own resources and energies by some little independent farming operation of their own. When at school, the teacher drills them thoroughly; when at home they receive no such close training. The teacher gives the boy a sum to do, and lets him work it out of his own resources. But a farmer rarely gives a boy the use of a half-acre of land, on which he may raise corn or cabbage or roots for himself, though knowing that the boy could plant and cultivate it if he were allowed a chance, and that such a privilege would be likely to develop his energies, and show of what stuff he was made. The notion was too common that a boy was all work, and had no ambition—whatever work was in him must be got out of him, just as if he had been a horse or an ox. It was known that at some time he must take care of himself, yet he was not properly taught how to do so. The stimulant of letting him have a small piece of ground for his own profit was too rarely held out to him. No one knew what such a privilege might do for an energetic boy. If he failed the first year, he would be likely to know the cause of failure, and avoid it in the future. If he succeeded, he would feel an honest pride—the very kind of pride which every father should encourage in his child; and that success would stimulate him to try again and do still better. Both failure and success would be very likely to set him to reading about what others had done in the same line—how they had prospered—and thus a fund of knowledge would be acquired for him to draw upon whenever he set up for himself.

One November morning there came on a heavy rain that lasted all day, with an east wind so cold as to make the barn a very uncomfortable reading room, so the boys adjourned to the kitchen, and huddled around the stove. But as the rain drove all the rest of the family into the house, there was so great an assembly in what was, at the best of times, a very small room, that Mrs. Spangler became quite irritable at having so many in her way. She was that day trying out lard, and wanted the stove all to herself. In her ill-humor at being so crowded up, she managed to let the lard burn; and at this she became so vexed that she told Tony with Joe and Bill, to go out—she couldn't have them in her way any longer.

They accordingly went back to the barn, and lay down in the hay, covering themselves with a couple of horse-blankets. These were not very nice things for one to have so close to his nose, as they smelt prodigiously strong of the horses; but farmers' boys are used to such perfumes, and they kept the little fellows so warm that they were quite glad to escape the crowd and discomfort of the kitchen. These became at last so great, that even Uncle Benny, seeing that he was not wanted there just then, got up and went over to the barn also. There he found Tony reading aloud from a newspaper that had been left at the house by a pedlar a few days before. Tony was reading about the election, and how much one set of our people were rejoicing over the result.

As Uncle Benny came into the barn Tony called out, "Uncle Benny, the President's elected—did you know it?"

"O yes, I knew it; but what President do you mean?" responded Uncle Benny.

"Why, President Lincoln. He was a poor boy like me, you know."

"But can you tell me, boys," asked Uncle Benny, "who will be President in the year 1900?"

"Dear me, Uncle Benny," replied Tony, "how should we know?"

"Well, I can tell," responded the old man.

The boys were a good deal surprised at hearing these words and at once sat up in the hay.

"Who is he?" demanded Tony.

"Well," replied Uncle Benny, "he is a boy of about your age, say fifteen or sixteen years old."

"Does he live about here?" inquired Bill, the youngest of the party.

"Well, I can't say as to that," answered the old man, "but he lives somewhere on a farm. He is a steady, thoughtful boy, fond of reading, and has no bad habits; he never swears, or tells a lie, or disobeys his parents."

"Do you think he is as poor as we are, Uncle Benny?" said Tony.

"Most likely he is," responded the old man. "His parents must be in moderate circumstances. But poverty is no disgrace, Tony. On the contrary, there is much in poverty to be thankful for, as there is nothing that so certainly proves what stuff a boy is made of, as being born poor, and from that point working his way up to a position in society, as well as to wealth."

"But do poor boys ever work their way up?" inquired Tony.

"Ay, many times indeed," said Uncle Benny. "But a lazy, idle boy can do no such thing—he only makes a lazy man. Boys that grow up in idleness become vagabonds. It is from these that all our thieves and paupers come. Men who are successful have always been industrious. President Lincoln for a long time split rails at twenty-five cents a hundred. But see how they got up in the world."

"But I thought the Presidents were all lawyers," said Tony.

"Well, suppose they were," replied Uncle Benny; "they were boys first. I tell you that every poor boy in this country has a great prospect before him, if he will only improve it as these men improved theirs. Everything depends on himself, on his own industry, sobriety, and honesty. They can't all be Presidents, but if they should all happen to try for being one, they will be very likely to reach a high mark. Most of the rich men of our country began without a dollar. You have as fair a chance of becoming rich or distinguished as many of them have had. You must always aim high."

"But how are we to make a beginning?" demanded Joe.

"I'll tell you," replied Uncle Benny. But at that moment a loud blast from the tin horn summoned them to dinner. They all thought it the sweetest music they had heard that day, and hurried off to the house.

(To be Continued.)