

pretending to cipher or write composition, but in reality very often killing time until recess or dinner hour; when we were commanded to put up our work and turn out—after which we were dismissed. As there was a large spruce woods just by, our pastime very often was to pick gum at recess; and at dinner hour we often repaired to what we termed “the barrens,” a place where we found nearly at all seasons berries of different kinds,—if no blueberries then teaberries or withrood. After being there a reasonable time some one would sing out, “school will be in.” We knew the consequences of disregarding this warning, and a stampede would be made, the strongest leading the way with the youngest bringing up the rear. Many a tumble and bruise we got, but what of that. As we neared the school we would slacken our pace to get composed and allow the less speedy to come up, and it was wonderful how often we would turn up just as the teacher would be slapping on the desk with his stick which told us time was up.

In this “barrens” there was a house of modest pretensions, which we shied clear of, as it was understood that the owner kept dogs which were very ferocious. So the berries for a considerable distance around the house were untouched by the scholars. Whenever a bark was heard it meant, “beware!” One day I went to this house with a grown-up friend, and after waiting for some time for the owner to take away the fastening and props from the door, we entered. There was a partition through the centre of the building. The first part contained a cow in one corner, a pig in the other, with hens roosting overhead; the family living in the other end. The old lady of the house showed the true motherly instinct by offering me a cake. I was such a little fellow I don’t remember whether I took it or not. The father and sons were greatly in demand in those days to play the fiddle. They were great players, and frolics were very common. When they did not go away to