

that he would have the Weeks build, and, by the time he was fifteen, he was as lean, big-boned, awkward a hobbledehoy as the old man could wish. His grandfather's wealth did not spoil him in the least; he was the kind of a boy it would have been difficult to spoil.

He had no fondness for books, but it is to be doubted if that was much of a grief to his grandfather. He was good at mathematics, — he used to work out problems for fun, — and an excellent memory for certain kinds of details enabled him to master geography without difficulty. The great passion of his boyhood was for the big, roaring, pounding steamboats that went down to New Orleans. His ambition, like that of nearly every boy who lived in sight of those packets, was to be a river pilot, and he was nearing his majority before he outgrew it.

He was twenty-two years old when he fell in love with Ethel Harvey. She was nineteen when she came home from the Eastern school where she had spent the past five years, and she burst upon Jim in the first glory of her womanhood. When she had grown an old woman the young girls still envied her beauty, and wondered what it must have been in its first bloom.