

want me, I've got my potatoes to look after.'

"Oh, let her go, then!" He caved in right away—"But, mind you, I've got to have a sure thing on it!"

"Grandad was out in the field already. He's always been a famous old boy for fishin', you know, and he's likewise got a county reputation for bein' fond of the silver."

"Well, he's a lot too deaf to get long explanations into; but after unendin' shoutin' I made him understand that Mr. Hotchkiss wanted us to ketch bass for him that day at twenty-five cents a-piece. And when he got hold of that, he just dropped his hoe and started back over them potato drills on the hobblin' jump. Nor he didn't open his lips to answer me anything more. He wasn't wastin' time that way. He lit out for where his rod and line lay in the tool-house, and then started turnin' up worms by the barn, his spade just a-shakin'."

"We'd been makin' head-cheese the night before, and there was a good half-bushel of waste meat scraps around. And I knowed that for ground-baitin' I couldn't want anything better. By nine o'clock the wife had it ready and lunch put up, and with Grandad snarlin' that we was takin' it dretful easy, we started off."

"I've told ye that when this here Hotchkiss and Sparks had had me for a couple of days, they probably figgered that by that time I showed them all the good places on the Wistass. Well, I hadn't now, not by one or two, anyways, or mebbe even by three or four. And as Grandad and me lined off with Hotchkiss down the river, it was for one of them places I'd previously overlooked that I was leadin' the procession."

"That was the summer after Williamson built his dam up above there, at the Falls; and it wasn't till well on to October that we got him lawed into openin' his sluices. So just at that particular time the River was a good two foot lower than it had ever been before or is ever likely to be again. You know that island with the big elms on it down below the Chute?—well, you could wade over to it that Spring, for all the current. And from it, by goin' in waist deep you could work your way from stone to stone clear out to the middle of the river. And right there there was a big, flat rock, hardly ankle deep, that commanded a bass hole that I reckon can't be beat between here and Moose Factory. The main plunge of the rapids pitches right into it—(you can see where it lies, now!)—and at the foot of it the big eddies came up flat and white-edged and boilin'. For side walls, four or five foot down there's a dozen of them hulkin', yalla-green boulders that small-mouth bass is so fond of keepin' their tails under. And on that table of rock which overlooks the pool there's just comfortable standin' room for two people."

"For that reason—and also because I didn't choose that he should learn the way out to that particular hole—I give Hotchkiss to understand that he'd have to fish from shore. And he agreed to it ready enough. Indeed, the only thing that seemed to be worryin' him was the fear that we weren't goin' to get him his 'sure thing.' And he was even more nervous lest Sparks should come down the river and surprise us. You see he had in him that guilty conscience which gives a man no peace. And after awhile he dropped his rod altogether and climbed up on that wooded hill there, to keep a watch out."

"Well, Grandad and I went at it systematic. I didn't hurry to get down to rod work, myself; but I did start in to sow the pool good and thick with them head-cheese scraps. And after that I was willin'—if Grandad wasn't—to wait till half the bass below the Chute got their noses towards us. And when at last I did begin to give them the steel to cut their teeth on, they were there in millions. Oh, you couldn't be in doubt about that! They didn't give your lead time to plumb the bottom. They had the line a-rippin' off yon, and a sawin' back hither, before you could balance yourself after makin' your cast. Grandad had got his seventh, and—although I'd only been fishin' about ten minutes—I'd got my fourth, when I heard a callin'. It was Hotchkiss beckonin' out on the edge of the hill, and though nothin' seemed to of alarmed him, I went in to see what he wanted. "Well," he says, pretty anxious—

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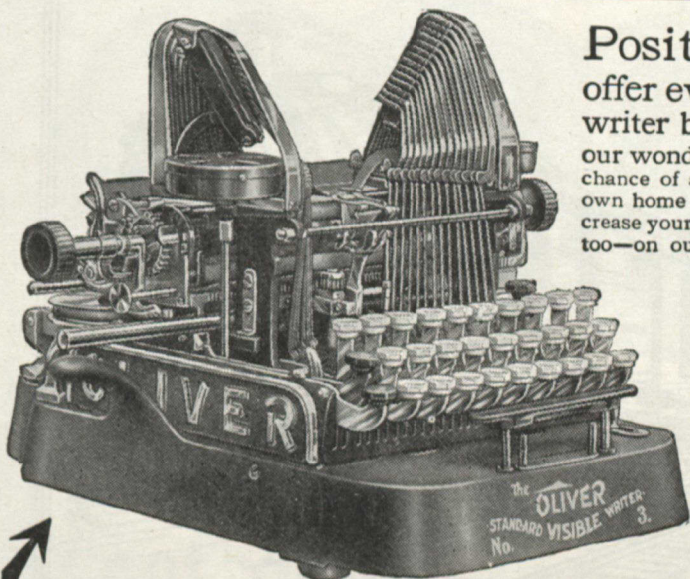
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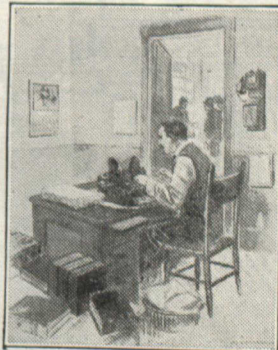
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