

SOMETHING BETTER THAN FOOT-BALL

"I seen it comin', brethren, but I kept my mouth shet. 'Time enough to cross the bridge when we come to it,' I says to Martha the day after we come back from Spindle Falls. We'll have to tell him to go, and God bless him. An' we mustn't be grudgin' and selfish about it and make him unhappy. He has growed too big for us, that's all. And they need him over yonder wuss than we do, tho' I don't know what we're goin' to do without him. He ain't acceptin' the call because they can pay him a lot of more salary. We know better'n that. He's been promoted, that's what it amounts to; and we can't hold him back by the coat-tails like a passel of mean-spirited gumps."

Deacon Stiles wiped his eyes and then slumped into his seat. In his own way he had expressed the opinions of his companions. With heavy hearts, yet all ungrudgingly, as Ezra had exhorted them, they voted to permit their pastor to resign in his own good time. After the meeting Kingsland walked home with Ezra, and Martha welcomed them at the kitchen door. The warm, homely comfort of the place was very cheering, and the deacon banished his long face and plucked up heart to say:

"It's all for the best, mother, ain't it? I'm glad I went over and spoke up for him and put Johnny Hemphill in his place. I didn't know I was cuttin' off my own nose an' helpin' our minister to remove