

BENJAMIN WILLIAM BRIGHT

With the passing of the years his visits to the hillside became less frequent, and the day at length arrived when his presence excited the general exclamation:

"Well, I never; if it ain't ole Beniman Willum Bright!"

It was the hermit of the hill-top, but leaning more heavily upon his cane. His objective point was the general store, where the contents of his time-worn basket were exchanged for the simplest necessities of life. Limpy always had a ready welcome for him, and once his order had been packed in the basket, along with several back-date weeklies, he was regularly conducted to the little office, where he was regaled on seed cake and native wine before he retraced his steps up the hill. At his door the villager often paused and talked to him as he labored over his neat garden patch or sat beside the open fire. Sometimes he had but an absent welcome for them, but as a rule they rarely took their departure without having spent several hours, during which he talked enthusiastically of the great projects in store for Sunshine-Shadder once the water power of Kinglyville was coaxed to the hillside. It was a manifold scheme of his second childhood and usually ended abruptly, for the weary caller was wont to tear himself away, leaving Benjamin alone to think out this castle in the air.

A time came when Sunshine-Shadder saw him no more among them. The children wondered, but the older realized that Benjamin's sun was dipping slowly