

THE EVENING TIMES, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1905.

SHORT STORY.

What John Found.

COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.

Breath was nearly over. The boys and girls gathered in the playground outside of the log schoolhouse, but no play was going on. Most of the boys had their books in their hands and were pouring over them as if to make up for all the idle times in their lives. The girls sat on the wooden benches, looking at the boys with a sort of awe.

The schoolhouse was built just outside of a mountain village in North Carolina. The boys were in butternut, or blue cloth, the girls in a kind of linen, all of which their mothers had spun and woven.

Outside of the fence was a gang of little negroes, whom the white children ordered about with an air of authority; for poor as they were, their fathers all were slave owners.

There was a row of shiny black faces at the top of the fence.

"Gorry! Look at Mas' Will! I think he got it!"

"Phaw! Gorry, you Victory! Our Mas' Bob's twice as good a scholar. See how he's pokin' into dat book."

The others volunteered no opinions, but shouted.

"Hooray! Which of ye a gyal to be a suler? Mas' Bob Sevier he gwine! Cunnell Bob Sevier! Hooray!"

Never had there been such a day known in Uncle Job's school.

Bob Sevier, a fair, thin boy with round blue eyes, sat on the steps, turning over the leaves of his "History Sacrae."

He knew every word and line; but he turned leaf after leaf with his cold shivering fingers.

When the little negroes shouted for "Cunnell Bob!" he felt a lump in his throat, choking him. If he should not win! Bob had always been head boy in the school, out during the last month he had worked harder than ever.

The cause was this: Judge Peters, who was now Congressman from this district, had paid a visit to the village a few weeks before, and had dropped into the school one morning and made the boys a little speech.

"I was a p-pil here," he said. "There is the very desk at which I sat. Uncle Job taught me pretty much all I know. My father could not afford to send me to college, and I am sure neither could yours afford to send you there. But I want to give some boys a chance such as I did not see myself a colored in the point of a cadet to West Point, and I propose instead of giving it to some rich man's son, that the boy in this school who passes the best examination a month from now shall have it."

This was the speech. It made the boys as wild as if he had put fire in their brains. Not a boy there who did not see himself a colored in full regiments, preceded by a brass band, riding up the streets of the village in triumph. They never had done anything but lounge in the sunny, chilly highland hamlet, listening to the interminable stories of the hunters, who came in with petty, or playing "risky out" with the little negroes.

John Fremoy, the shabbiest of them all, sat apart from the other boys with his sister Louise.

"Now, Lou, let me hear no this page," and he began: "Charlesagne, otherwise Charles the Great, was the son of Pepin the Short, the first of the Carolingian-Carlovigian-oh, what comes next?"

"Dynasty," prompted Lou.

"And what's the meaning of 'dynasty'?" "I'd like to know? Such rubbish! I don't understand a word of it. There's no use to try, Lou!"

Lou's eyes filled, and the tears rolled down her dashed cheeks. John only shut his jaws a little firmer, and fixed his dark eyes on the ground. They were different from Bob Sevier's, which glowed like lamps.

"I might as well give up, Lou. Uncle Job says patience and hard work will take any boy through. But there's a difference in boys. Now, Bob Sevier's don't work half as hard over his books as I do; but just look at him. I reckon he could go over the Carolingians, or any other Virginian, like a trotting horse."

"Oh, yes, I reckon he could," groaned Lou. "But only think of West Point, Jack! You'd be a gentleman and a soldier, and see the world. And if you don't get it, why then—"

"Then Uncle Bill will set me to ploughing in the fall. He said only this morning, he'd wasted enough money on our schooling, and you and I must be to work to earn our salt."

John took up his book and went at the lesson, with a desperate energy, while Lou sat crying silently.

The children were orphans, and lived with their uncle, a farmer, on Mount Craggy. He was wretchedly poor, like all the other mountaineers, and was, beside, a coarse, hard-natured man.

The school-bell rang.

"It's coming now," said John, as he got up, and shut the book.

"You're powerful on 'rithmetic, Johnny, mind that. Jest you keep up," eagerly whispered Lou, running along beside him.

The boys crowded into the hot little school-room, and the girls followed, excepting Lou, who finally went to the wood-pile again. She knew she should not be missed, and she could not bear to hear John's examination.

The poor little girl had but one friend in the world, her brother, who sat down, her hands shaking as in a chill.

"He'll fail—I know he'll fail," she said, looking up to the sky and talking out loud. "I can't stand it! Oh, Heavenly Father! I can't!"

As with most Southern children, "Heavenly" was real to Lou. Then she began to pray, fast and hard, to this far-away Friend in the sky to help John.

"Oh, dear, only get him over the Latin and them Virgils! He'll manage the arithmetic himself."

She sat there an hour or more, hearing only a droning voice now and then from the open windows.

At last there was a hush. Uncle Job was going to give his decision. The little negroes crowded up to the school-house steps.

Lou stood up and threw her call-throat, shouting: "He'll fail! He'll fail!"

She did not know what she did. She was stifling with sudden, terrible heat. Her strained eyes were on the door, not knowing what she did.

Presently she heard Uncle Job's voice in a low brief words. But she did not catch them. They sounded like the words of a great man who was saying: "John had won—John Fremoy."

Suddenly there was a cheer inside. Then the negroes took it up.

"Hooray! Cunnell Bob! Hooray for Bob!"

Lou sat down and covered her face with her hands. Her brother came to her in a moment.

"Get up, and come along home," he said, roughly.

Six caught his arm and patted it. "Don't you mind it, Johnny," she said. "You kin do lots of things Bob Sevier knows nothing about. You shied, merely."

"No, Bob won't fail," he said, proudly. "I'm a dunce, I didn't deserve it; that's the worst of it."

His face was colorless, even to his lips, but he showed but his disappointment in no other way.

Judge Peters came to the village the next day, heard the report of the examination, sent for Sevier, and promised him the appointment.

He then went over to Cebel Fremoy's, John's uncle. The boy erect over, toward right, to catch glimpses of the great man who might have made him happy for life, but had not done it.

He hung miserably about the place until evening, and then set out homeward.

Coming to the edge of Craggy Creek, just where it turned from the mountain, he sat down on the bank, and the first hot feet into the water. To-morrow he was to be set ploughing with the negroes.

"It's all over for me," his uncle said. "Ye'd a chance for West Point, an' ye didn't take it. So ye ken ken with the darkies for the rest of yer life. I'll feed ye no more."

John sat moodily flinging pebbles into the water, until dusk came on, and an owl began to hoot.

Suddenly the boy stood up, trembling with excitement, holding a stone in his hand up to the light, feeling light. It shone with a brilliant lustre, like a great drop of dew in the morning sun. As he moved it, it flashed a blood-red star in his dirty palm. John had heard of the ruby which had once been found in the next gorge.

"It was worth thousands of dollars," he sobbed, rather than spoke. "I heard Judge Peters tell my uncle there was a corundum on his farm and a ruby is a kind of corundum. I am rich for life!"

He sat down, breathless, carefully rubbing the brilliant lump in his hand, as Aladdin might have done his lamp. What was West Point to this? Money, beautiful houses, a glimpse of the world, an easy happy life for himself and Lou.

"Poor Lou! I was so cross to her today! I'll go and tell her."

Then he stopped as if some one had struck him. The ruby was not his. He had found it on Judge Peters' land.

The Baird Company's Wine of Tar Honey and Wild Cherry

A Lubricant to the Throat. A Tonic to the Vocal Chords.

The Baird Co.'s Wine of Tar, Honey and Wild Cherry is the best remedy for coughs and colds I have ever used.

MARY A. SHAW, Woodstock, N. B.

The boy sat down again, and for one whole hour the tempter strove with him. If there was one quality strong and dominant in John Fremoy, it was his honesty; but this was a temptation such as seldom comes in the way of any man.

The next morning Judge Peters was mounting his horse to go into the village, when a boy came into the yard. He walked quickly, as if driven on from some force behind.

The judge waited, one foot in the stirrup. As long as John Fremoy lived, he remembered, like a sudden, terrible picture, the glaring light of the little, muddy yard, the starting negro boy holding the horse, the portly, kind-looking old man awaiting his approach.

John reached the judge, he stopped and was silent. He had his little speech all ready, but his tongue was stiff and his throat parched.

"Well, my boy, what is it?" asked the judge, kindly.

"John thrust out his hand. 'I'm worth a great many thousand dollars. I found it on your land.'"

Judge Peters took the stone and examined it eagerly; then he turned to John and looked at him curiously.

"Why didn't you keep it, if it's worth so much?"

"I had a mind to, but it's yours," he turned away.

"Stop, boy, who are you?"

"John Fremoy, sir."

"Oh! Uncle Job spoke of you to me. You are uncommonly quick at figures, eh?"

"I am, I'm a dunce at everything else. If I had not been I might have gone to West Point."

"You're looking very thoughtfully at John. 'Very well, Fremoy, I'm very much pleased with your honesty. Sevier knows nothing about it. You shied, merely.'"

"No, Bob won't fail," he said, proudly. "I'm a dunce, I didn't deserve it; that's the worst of it."

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Operations have ceased on the Upper St. John—L. W. Wilson III.

Grand Falls, March 16.—Miss Carrie Wilson arrived home last night, having been summoned from Boston, on account of the serious illness of her father, L. W. Wilson. Miss Wilson is a trained nurse, being a graduate of the Massachusetts General Hospital.

L. W. Wilson is one of Grand Falls' most prominent citizens. He was taken suddenly ill a few days ago, and is now in a precarious condition, and but slight hopes are entertained of his recovery.

Hugh Warnock is confined to his residence with a severe attack of la grippe.

Operations have ceased in the woods for the winter. Tomorrow, Giberson's crew of eighty men and seventeen span of horses, are expected out, and the remainder of Burgess' crew will be out in a few days.

The down freight was stalled in the yard here all day yesterday. The train was a heavy one, and despite every exertion and expedient, the worn-out locomotive could not haul the train from the station yard. Even after the train had been cut in sections, it was impossible for the train to pull out. Finally in the evening, a start was made which proved successful. C. P. R. trains are continually delayed on this division.

The house of commons at London yesterday adopted Premier Balfour's "Guillotine" motion 208 to 129. What is designated as the guillotine motion was introduced in the house of commons March 15, with the purpose of securing the sanctioning of the estimates before the close of the fiscal year, March 31. It is another term for closure.

IT WILL PAY YOU, IF YOU ARE IN BUSINESS TO ADVERTISE IN THESE SPACES.

HUNDRED DOLLARS.

Offered By Farmer to Clear His Orchard of Snow.

Young Nova Scotians Going to The West --- Skating Party at Canning --- Personal Notes.

Kentville, Mar. 16.—A. D. Payzant, Canning, is rapidly recovering from the effects of an operation at the Victoria general hospital, Halifax.

Mrs. Solomon of Kentville has lately received news of the serious illness from consumption of her brother-in-law, Mr. Grocott, of Melrose, Mass. Mr. Grocott is well known in Kings County, his wife being a daughter of James Kennedy of Canning.

A number of the young people of Kings County are joining the Spring excursions to the West. Messrs. Edward Hamilton, and Stanley Fuller of Grand Pre, left last week, the former to return to a home, which he has already established there, and the latter to take up land, with the expectation of making a home. Harcourt Bentley of Shubenacadie Mills, leaves next week for Winnipeg, where Sarah and Edith Cox of Canning, start on Thursday next for Winnipeg. Miss Sarah has been for a few years, a teacher in the west, but has resigned her position, and will shortly after arriving at Winnipeg, be one of the principal parties at an important ceremony.

George Chipman of Grand Pre, has returned to his home from Trent, where he has been studying at the Agricultural College.

Miss Florence Hickey, daughter of Rev. David Hickey of Barrington, is visiting friends in Canning.

The young people of Canning were the hosts and hostesses at a very successful skating party in the rink at Canning on Tuesday evening.

The fruit growers of the county are facing a very serious situation this spring. In many places, the orchards are completely buried in snow, and the result to the young trees will probably be serious. As the snow melts, the branches of the trees are found to be breaking, and the trees themselves splitting from the trunks. The stalks of many of the young trees, are found to be badly bent from the weight of snow against them.

An enterprising farmer of Western Kings is reported to have offered one hundred dollars to the person who would clear his orchard of snow, but as yet no one has accepted the contract. Field mice, too, have done some damage to the trees. The stalks of many of the young trees, are found to be badly bent from the weight of snow against them.

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H. A. McKeown

Ex-M. P. P., St. John, N. B., says: "I take great pleasure in stating that I have used Hawker's Tolu and Cherry Balsam for the last eight years and consider it the best cough cure I ever used. I find Hawker's Liver Pills an excellent liver regulator."

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St. John, N. B.



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