

"That's so," said the whittler; "I had forgotten about that. It's the first night, so we must all be there to encourage old Benderson. You'll be on hand to-night, won't you, Macdonald?"

The blacksmith made no answer, but turned to Sandy and asked him savagely what in — and — nation he was standing gawking there for. Why didn't he go outside and get things ready for the tire setting? What in thunder was he paying him for, anyhow? Wasn't there enough loafers round, without him joining the ranks?

Sandy took this rating with equanimity, and, when the smith's back was turned, he shrugged his shoulders, took a fresh bite of tobacco from the plug which he drew from his hip pocket, winking at the others as he did so. He leisurely followed Macdonald out of the shop, saying in a whisper as he passed the whittler: "I wouldn't rile the old man, if I were you."

The club then adjourned to the outside, all except those who sat on the bench. Yates asked:

"What's the matter with Macdonald? Doesn't he like protracted meetings? And, by the way, what are protracted meetings?"

"They're revival meetings—religious meetings, you know, for converting sinners."

"Really?" said Yates. "But why protracted? Are they kept on for a week or two?"

"Yes; I suppose that's why, although, to tell the truth, I never knew the reason for the name. Protracted meetings always stood for just the same thing ever since I was a boy, and we took it as meaning that one thing, without thinking why."

"And doesn't Macdonald like them?"

"Well, you see, it's like this: He never