

TWO SCHOOLFELLOWS.

VER the hill and valley,
Drawn by the steam horse's power,
The railroad king is speeding
Fifty miles an hour!

He counts his wealth by millions,
By thousands counts his men;
O'er ten thousand miles of gleaming rails
He waves his sceptre pen.

The diamonds of the coal mines,
Where toil the miners grim,
And the gold of the waving cornfields
Pay tribute unto him.

But pale and worn is the monarch;
Unheeding is the eye
Before which the smiling country
Goes flitting and whirling by.

And he sees but does not notice
The farmer rein old Gray
At the crossing, to let the special pass,
Speeding upon its way.

Stalwart and strong is Farmer John,
And bronzed with sun and weather.
"Ha, wife," he laughs, "you'd never think
He and I were boys together!"

"He, that shadow, silent and sly,
No bigger than my arm,
He owns a hundred millions, and I
Have only you and the farm!"

"But, Lord, whoever would change with
him?
Poor fellow, he never sees
Our upland meadow of clover red,
Our blossoming apple trees.

"He only hears the clanging wheels
And the engine's whistle shrill;
Ours are the humming of the bees
And the wild bird's summer trill.

"And while in the dusty town he toils
At a toil that ne'er is done,
I swing my scythe to a merry song
In the cheery wind and sun.

"And we shall be jogging behind old Gray
When in earth his bones shall lie,
How long do these meadows keep the sound
Of his swift train roaring by?"

ROSS CARSON'S COURAGE.

SHOUTING, laughing, pushing against
each other, the boys rushed out of the
school-house pell-mell.

"Look out, Ross Carson," shouted
Tom Lane, in a tone of pretended
alarm, "there's a spider on the pump
handle. Run, quick, it may bite you."

There was a roar of laughter at this
would-be witty remark, and the eyes
of a score or more thoughtless boys
were bent upon the figure of a slender,
delicate-looking lad who had been one
of the first to get out, and who had
approached the pump for the purpose
of getting a drink.

His face flushed painfully as Tom's
jest fell on his ear, and the hand that
held the tin drinking-cup trembled
perceptibly, and his lips scarcely
touched the water.

"O, he'll stand anything rather
than double up his little fist" cried
Tom, and crowding close to Ross he
deliberately knocked the books from
under his arm. The slender lad's face
flushed at the insult, but he said noth-
ing. He stopped, picked the books
up, and then walked on again.

He was quite aware of Tom Lane's
great anxiety to pick a quarrel with
him, but was determined to give him
no excuse for doing so. For Ross
knew that he could not with safety
enter into any trial of strength with a
boy so much older than himself. His
lungs were weak, and the doctor had
said they could bear no strain what-
ever. But it was hard to be called a
coward, to bear insults of every descrip-
tion without open resentment, to feel
that he was looked upon with contempt

by his companions because no taunts
or sneers could induce him to fight.
And he was too sensitive and shy to ex-
plain to them his reason for not doing
so, knowing well that his explanation
would be greeted with ridicule and
laughter. So he bore his various
trials in silence, and not even his
mother knew what he endured. He
did not know that this forbearance
showed him possessed of true heroism,
for, like most boys, he had a strong
admiration for deeds of daring, and
saw little merit in silent endurance.

Tom Lane was the most daring boy
among them all. He boasted that he
had the coolest head, the strongest
arm, and the greatest amount of cour-
age of any fellow of his age in Hills-
boro', and none disputed his claim.
He was always ready for a fight, and
generally came off victor in any con-
test. He had no pity for weakness,
no charity for timidity, and thought
all those who feared him fair game for
his powers of teasing. Ross might
have been fairly treated by the other
scholars but for Tom, who was never
weary of exciting enmity against him,
and, understanding how to magnify
the veriest trifles, was ever showing
him up as "the biggest coward in
Hillsboro' Academy."

But retribution was near at hand,
and Tom was to be strangely punished
for his sins in respect to Ross.

A new town-hall was being built in
Hillsboro', and a very high, imposing
edifice it was to be, with a steeple
second to none. Tom Lane heard his
father, who was the contractor for the
building, say that a magnificent view
could be obtained from this half-com-
pleted steeple, and the next day at the
noon recess Tom proposed to half-a-
dozen of his young friends to go up
and take a look for themselves.

"I have a pass from father," he
said, "and the carpenters won't make
any fuss."

The ascent to the steeple was easily
made, for a narrow, winding stair led
up to it; and the boys soon attained a
height that made their heads swim as
they looked down, breathless, and saw
how small appeared the people on the
pavement below.

"A good place for a suicide," said
Tom, as he leaned out.

"Do be careful," said a low voice in
a tone of entreaty, and looking around,
the boy saw Ross Carson standing
near. He had come up the stairs un-
perceived.

"How came you here, you little
coward?" asked Tom, rudely.

"The carpenters gave me leave to
come up," answered Ross, quietly.
"I did not know any one was up here,
and I was anxious to see the view.
But it is a dangerous place."

"It's likely you think so," sneered
Tom. "You'd find the head of a
barrel a dangerous place. As for me,
I'd like to see the place where I
wouldn't go! Boys, do you see that?"

He pointed to a scaffolding which
had been erected about the steeple for
the use of the workmen. It projected
several feet, and overhung the vast
chasm below.

"We see it; but what of it?"
asked Louis Raymond.

"You'll see what of it," answered
Tom. "It's a jolly place to dance a
hornpipe;" and before his companions
could realize his intention, he had
climbed out upon the scaffolding and
was walking fearlessly about it.

The boys stared in sheer amazement

at such recklessness, and begged him
to be careful.

But their fears for his safety only
made Tom more anxious to show his
boasted courage, and he began rather
a feeble imitation of a sailor's hornpipe.

"Wouldn't it be a long jump to the
pavement?" he said.

As he spoke he looked down—a
fatal thing; for his head, which had
until now been so cool and steady,
began to whirl strangely. He could
not remove his eyes from the awful
chasm below him. It seemed to
fascinate him.

The boys looked at each other in
horror. They saw the terrible danger
which menaced him; they knew it
was only a question of moments now
before he must fall and be dashed to
atoms on the pavement below. He
stood in a kind of stupor, looking
down into the fascinating gulf, his eyes
wild and staring, his face white with
terror. He, too, knew the awful
danger in which he stood, but he was
powerless to help himself. The slight-
est change of position, even the rising
of his eyes and he must fall. The
gulf seemed drawing him on; his brin
grew more torpid with every instant,
and his eyes seemed starting from their
sockets. Back of him shuddered his
horror-stricken comrades, waiting in
an agony of suspense for the fatal end
of this terrible drama; before and be-
low him yawned the great chasm, at
the bottom of which the people moving
along looked like dwarfs.

Suddenly there was a movement
among the boys, and Ross Carson,
with white face and set teeth, climbed
quickly and noiselessly out of the
steeple on to the scaffolding, and with
steady step approached the boy who
stood on the brink of such a fearful
death.

"If he touches him, Tom will fall,"
whispered Louis Raymond.

Low as the whisper was, Ross heard
it, and half turned his head toward
Louis, pausing an instant as if to
think. Then he made a quick, firm
step forward, and throwing his arms
around Tom's waist, dragged him back-
ward.

It was all over in an instant. In the
face of a fearful and imminent danger
Ross saved his enemy, and slowly,
carefully, for every step was peril,
drew him back to the steeple, and with
the help of the other boys got him
inside once more, white as a corpse, it
is true, and utterly unnerved, but safe.

There was little said by any one.
In silence Ross helped Tom descend
the winding stair, and then walked
home as quickly as possible.

"I don't feel well enough to go to
school again this afternoon," he said to
his mother, "so I'll weed out your
flower-beds for you."

"You are pale, said Mrs. Carson.
"I'm afraid you study too hard."

Ross did not answer, but threw off
his coat and began to weed the beds,
hoping by hard work to overcome the
nervousness which had possessed him
ever since leaving the new town hall.

He was still weeding, a couple of
hours later, when he heard the tramp
of many feet, and looking up, he saw
about a dozen of his school-mates
coming in at the little wooden gate,
Tom Lane first of all.

"I've come to ask your pardon,
Ross Carson," said Tom, holding out
his hand. "You've taught me this
day what true courage is, and made me
see what a cowardly sneak I've been."

Tom's lips quivered as he made this
humiliating confession, and his eyes
were moist with the tears which he
could restrain with only the greatest
effort.

Ross took the proffered hand in a
warm and hearty grasp as he said,
"I'd have done as much for any one,
Tom. Don't make so much of it.
But I'm out and out glad to be friends
with you."

And friends, fast and true, they
were from that time forth, and no one
ever again even whispered that Ross
Carson lacked courage. The story of
that brave deed of his on the scaffold-
ing about the new hall had borne
testimony to his courage which was
sufficiently convincing, and the people
of Hillsboro' were proud of their young
townsman. In their eyes he was a
hero. But I think that the noblest
thing about his brave act was that he
risked his life to save that of his
enemy.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

AN EARLY WRITING-PAPER.

MANY centuries before Christ, Numa
left writings upon the papyrus, whence
the name paper is derived. This plant,
which was revered as sacred by the
old Egyptians, grows abundantly in
the shallow streams and marshes in
upper Egypt and Syria. Bruce found
it growing in the river Jordan, and
noticed the curious fact that it always
presented the sharp, angular side of
its pear-shaped stem to the swift cur-
rent. The stem is eight or ten feet
high, two inches in diameter, and
crowned with a fringe of hair-like
leaves, which circle a blossom of slender
spikelets. Beneath the Brown sheath
which envelopes the root-stalk of this
dark-green plant lie other sheaths
which are very transparent. These,
when split into thin leaves and dried
in the sun, were glued together and
formed the roll of papyrus, on which
many of the ancient writings have
come down to us. This paper was
both flexible and durable. Specimens
from Pompeii can be seen in the
museum at Naples. In the fifth cen-
tury papyrus paper, of which many
varieties existed, was largely manu-
factured at Alexandria, and ranked
high in the commerce of nations. Its
use continued until about seven or
eight centuries ago.—*St. Nicholas.*

THE NORTH-WEST.

LET us for a moment glance at the
extent and resources of the great
North-West which we are called upon
to govern. Few have an idea of the
vast territory which we claim as ours,
and in which rebellion to some extent
exists among the inhabitants against
our authority. Taking the North-
West territory as extending from the
Province of Ontario to the Rocky
Mountains and from the American
boundary northwards we have an extent
of habitable country of about 1200
miles square, giving ample room for
the sustenance of many millions of the
human race; millions of acres of rich
and virgin soil await the ploughman's
labour to yield the golden harvest;
whilst portions of this land abound
with the richest herbage, affording
abundant pasture for countless flocks
and herds, a land seemingly preserved
by our Father above as a home and
refuge for the teeming millions of the
overcrowded countries of Europe.