

feverish haste to get on a level with those big fellows, I was constantly attempting all sort of reckless, daring feats, that called forth my father's grave reproof and my mother's loving entreaties.

Time and again would father say to me,—

“Walter, your rashness will be the death of you some day. Don't be in such a hurry to be a man before you've quit being a boy!”

But reproof and entreaty alike went unheeded; and that night, as I tossed restlessly about in bed, I made solemn vows to the stars peeping in through the window that next morning I would take Tiger and go off alone after the huge black bear which had been prowling around the sheepfold lately, and which father and the boys had twice hunted in vain.

Soothed by the prospect of the glory success would bring me, I fell asleep, and dreamed that, armed only with my jack-knife, I was chasing hard after the bear, which seemed half as big as the barn, yet ran away in the most flattering fashion.

Next morning all my temper had vanished, and so much of my valour had vanished with it that my bear-hunting would never have probably got beyond dreamland had not Jack, the moment I appeared, called out mockingly,—

“Behold the mighty hunter! Make way for Bantam, the renowned bear-slayer.”

The chorus of laughter that greeted this sally set me in a blaze again; but this time I held my tongue, and the teasing soon stopped.