

myself where there wasn't one or more sech folks. You've known some yourself, too. You rec'lect Wrestlin' Billy, that lived on Double Pond, I know. Now, did you ever meet a much better man than him? Pious, prayin' quiet, peace-makin', char'table; he was all that, and more. But some time or other, you know, Billy'd dreamed that he'd wrestled once with a angel, like Jacob. and he never waked up out o' that dream. But what harm come of it, anyway? I hold that he was a better man for it, somehow. You've heard him tell about it, haven't you? Don't you rec'lect how earnest and excited he'd get, so proud, and yet humble at the same time, tellin' o' that awful fight in the night-time, when he couldn't see who he was a-strugglin' with? Wasn't it creepy and scarey to hear him cry out, so loud and shrill like, 'I will not let thee go except thou bless me'?

"My! my! I never could keep from believin' in that story while he was a-tellin' it, could you? nor from bein' glad, either, when 'twas all over, the break o' day come, and Billy had prevailed. Don't you know how tired out he'd look after the wrestlin' part was ended, and how he'd wipe off his face and catch his breath and whisper out, 's well as he could, 'An' he blessed me there'?"

"And there was Jerry Whaples, o' Groton Corners; I don't know but his idee was the unusualest of any I've come acrost, for he took for his motter and watchword and war-cry, as you might say, through his whole life long, a verse from the Bible that never seemed to have much meanin' to anybody else. But it jest helped him along through everything. It's in Isaiah; I've looked it up lots o' times, and tried to get some comfort out of it: 'At Michmash He hath laid up His carriages.' Ain't that queer, now? Think o' that for a help and a comfort and a restin'-place! But 'twas ail that to Jerry. He had awful troubles—lost his wife and every child, one after the other; had his house and barn burned down—had sickness and sorer and trouble. But through everything that passage, that seems so holler and empty o' comfort or even meanin' to us, by itself, carried him safe along. I've heard him say it in sech dreadful times, enough to make a man's faith give way, I tell you. And when it come out in that tremblin' voice, and him a-smilin' through his cryin', why, it some way appeared even to me to have somethin' deep and holy and comfortin' in the sound. 'At Michmash He hath laid up His carriages.' I can't laugh about it as some do. I believe some way there is a meanin' to it, and 'twas showed to old Jerry in his dream. For a verse that lifts a bein' out o' sech dreadful pits o' sorer, strengthens him in battle, and comforts him till he can smile even through his cryin', and what's more, helps him to die the death o' the righteous—for 'twas what he stammered out, a word at a time, jest before he shet his eyes forever—why, it must, it *must* have somethin' to it we're too wide-awake to get hold of. Yes, he jest breathed it out at the last, so low that they couldn't hardly catch it, 'At Michmash,' says he, softly, and smilin' 's he speaks, 'He—hath—laid up—His—carriages,' and he was gone!

"Reuben Davison, down Bethel way, that allers had a child's