

admirable cottage plan. The ground proper are nicely laid out, with well kept drives and walks, beautiful lawns and a diversity of flower beds and ornamental shrubbery. Recently an English landscape gardner has been engaged and his artistic mind and hand will carry out the necessary details to complete the work well begun and quite well advanced.

#### PRACTICAL MAN IN CHARGE

The management by the present superintendent, S.S.Landt, has been of the practical kind. A progressive Adams County farmer prior to his appointment here two years ago, with a good war record, with the experience of being county treasurer and as a member of the assembly, he was fully equipped to enter upon the duties of so responsible a position. His conduct of affairs has been so admirable that no man in charge of state institutions in Wisconsin is more popular with the members of the Board of Control. His thorough knowledge of agriculture on generally scientific principles has done a great deal to produce satisfactory results. All of the vegetables needed for so many little mouths besides a great quantity of other substantial food is raised on the farm. In the two years of Supt. Landt's residence here the State Board of Control has been able to turn back into the treasury something more than \$10,500 of the legislative appropriation, at the same time carrying out needed and extensive improvements.

#### HAS WORKED FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHILDREN

Supt. Landt has brought about with the aid of the Board of Control many reforms in the management and care of children. Like Dr. Gordon of the Northern Hospital for the Insane he has impressed the subordinate officers with the importance of the fact that the institution was constructed for the benefit of those who are dependent upon the state's bounty and that the comfort of the children is paramount to that of those who are paid to look after them, at the same time not forgetting that the life of the officers many times trying, should be made pleasant. By the building of pavilions improving the sanitary conditions, a relaxation of many rigid rules, without impairing the proper discipline, the inmates enjoy life as children should, and in a way that it is hoped will make of them better men and women than they would be under the conditions in which they existed before coming here.

#### TO HAVE A COOKING SCHOOL

Recently the instruction in the schools has been improved by the hiring of a lady principal, and the teaching will be along the line of primary work in the public schools, as it has been to some extent in the past, including kindergarten work. New lines of manual instruction are to be introduced from time to time and a cooking school for girls will be established soon.

Under the admirable system which extends throughout the school it seems as though nothing has been left undone nor neglected to provide a proper place for the care of the children sent here, and to surround them with a refined and wholesome atmosphere. No taxpayer in the great state of Wisconsin can but think, after a personal visit and examination, that the great heart in which the idea of the school was propagated, was the result of an inspiration.

One shudders, too, when he stops to consider that prior to its building many gentle little beings, such as are seen here, were the inmates of poorhouses, of asylums, and subjected many times to coarse treatment and surrounded by dangerous influences. Here is every advantage for the proper development of the delicate little brain cells and the frail body. The republic of America will gain much by the establishment of the Wisconsin Home for Dependent Children.

#### EXCELLENT TEACHERS AND MATRONS

The proper care of the children is provided for in the selection of an excellent corps of teachers, matrons and other subordinates, those of the two former classes being refined and noble young women, who by natural instincts are drawn to the necessities of the dependent tots about them.

#### SELF RELIANT LITTLE ONES

The children from the time of their reception are taught to be self reliant as far as can be. To see those of 4 and 8 years helping themselves in a way that would do credit to children of twice their age is an amusing as well as a beneficial picture. Many forms of proper physical developments are carried out on the plan of Delsarte, in which the children will soon become proficient. The boys and girls are allowed the pleasant companionship of one another at play and in the dining room, though separated in the cottage life proper. This has been thought desirable as it results in better mannered boys and girls.

#### THE NEW HOSPITAL

Within the past two years a fine new hospital has been erected with competent nurses in charge and in which each child when received is placed in quasi-quarantine for ten days for a personal examination of its physical condition and demands. The children have ample exercise in the open air and diversified amusements after school hours. In the past two years 413 children have been admitted to the school who with the 302 enrolled at the time of Supt. Landt's first year of office, made a good many individuals to be cared for. The number at present is 245. Of the total number received and in the institution two years ago, 470 have been placed in good homes including thirty who were sent to the Home at Chippewa Falls.

#### SPLENDID PLAN OF ADOPTION

The system of placing children in homes for adoption is as perfect as it could be, the application for a child being followed by a careful investigation of the standing in the community of the person applying.

Strangely enough the supply of children from 3 to 5 years is always limited, especially girls, the mother or father in giving up little ones to the state preferring to send the boys here. The majority of the children returned after being taken away with the intention of permanent adoption is very small, as the homes are so well selected that the children are happy, their training while here making them generally obedient, useful and intelligent.

Within the past five years about \$27,000 has been expended in general

improvements, part of it being made necessary by a neglect of the Democratic administration preceding which by a system of false economy honed to continue in office, to the great disadvantage of the institutions which need the constant and fostering care of the state. Of the amount expended \$9,000 was used for the erection of the hospital. The total amount also includes \$9,500, the cost of the general heating plant which has been put in and which was very much needed.

#### PROUD OF THE INSTITUTION

The people of Sparta take pride in the school and in its successful management, and the people at large should be gratified that the institution has been provided for the care of this class of unfortunates whose budding lives appeal strongly to the sympathies of all, at least to every good parent and particularly to those who have been obliged by the vicissitudes of fortune to give up those who were dearer to them than their lives.

*A year later the Sparta-Up-To-Date, in illustrated pamphlet form describing all public institutions as well as private business affairs, quoted the laws authorizing the founding of the State Public School for Dependent and Neglected Children, the object for which it was established and offered the following in relation to the personal interest of the management:*

*July 1, 1895: Hon. S. S. Landt, was elected to the superintendency and has fulfilled the duties incumbent upon the position in such a manner as to win for himself the respect and admiration of everyone who is acquainted with conditions at the school. From the establishment of the institution up to September 30th, 1898, there has been expended for site, permanent improvements, equipments and current expenses the sum of \$578,503.13. The whole number of children admitted up to May 3, 1899 was 2011, the average number in school for the last fiscal year was 200. Since the opening of the institution up to May 3, 1899, there have been 1,622 children placed in homes all of whom have been indentured.*

*Sophonius S. Landt, was born at Aztalan, Jefferson County, Wisconsin removing in 1849 to Big Spring, Adams County, where he resided until 1879. Since then he has resided at Packsaukee and Friendship, having taken up his residence in the latter place in 1886. He received a common school education and entered Bronson Institute at Point Bluff, Wisconsin, but before completing his course there enlisted on September 14th, 1861, in Co. D. 10th. Wis. Infantry. He was promoted to orderly sergeant of his company and served with his regiment in the department of the Cumberland for three years and two months except when absent in Wisconsin on a recruiting detail. He returned to his Company having enlisted 83 men. He participated in the battles of Perryville, Stone River, Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Kennesaw Mountain, Altoona Pass, Buzzard Roost Gap, and finally in the siege of Atlanta. He was mustered out in November, 1864.*

*From 1886 to 1892 he was treasurer of Adams County, having previously held numerous minor town offices and is an officer of the Adams County Agricultural Society. In 1889, Governor Hoard appointed him a delegate to the*

the Farmers National Congress at Montgomery, Alabama. He was elected to the Assembly in 1894. July 1st. 1895, he was appointed Superintendent of the State School, which position he has filled in a very creditable manner and it is no secret among the people of Sparta that he has made by far the best official that has ever held the position.

He was married September 27th. 1865, to Miss Margaret A. Wilber. Five children are the result of this union, Arthur B. is paying teller of a bank at Hillsboro, North Dakota, Homer A. is with the Elgin Creamery Company. Ernest and Elma (twins) and Cora are at home with their parents.

Mr. Landt belongs to the Masons, the Odd Fellows and the Grand Army of the Republic. Mrs. Margaret A. Landt, nee Wilber, is a native of New York State and came to Wisconsin with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. Wilber at the age of twelve years and settled at Troy, Walworth County, where they remained two years, when they removed to Big Spring, Adams County, where she met and married Mr. Landt.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### FILIAL REVERENCE

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The resulting influences impressed upon the minds of those children during the period of time they were in the School, and the interest and care that was given for their welfare and comfort while molding their character and education for useful citizenship, created a relationship nearly akin to parent and child. And in most cases, through these influences and training they have fitted into their homes, and by their obedient and willing spirit have in fratiated their lives into the affections of their foster parents as effectually as would their own children.

Several years after leaving the school I was traveling through Wisconsin on the Milwaukee road and at a little town near Sparta, an elderly couple and a young man entered the car. There being but one vacant seat next in front of me, which the lady and young gentleman occupied and that left the other to sit with me. We had not gone far before I noticed the lady was feeling sad about something and the gentleman explained that they were his wife and adopted son, and that they were on their way to the son's wedding. They having no children had taken him from the State school when a small boy, and he had grown into their affections so deeply that the thoughts of returning to what would be a cheerless home without his presence were more than they could bear without visible emotions of sorrow, for he had been an obedient boy and had added to the life of their little family.

But among the many hundreds that had passed through the school during our administration, it could not be expected that all would continue to follow the precepts and teaching we tried to impress upon their minds during their stay with us, but the filial reverence and respect which even the erring ones retained for those whom they remembered as having sympathized with them and as having extended a friendly hand in their dependent childhood can be best illustrated by the following incident:

Some years after leaving the school and after selling a business in Milwaukee, we moved back to Kilbourn to live while building a barn and making other improvements on the farm which was only seven and a half miles out. On Saturday nights, after supper I usually walked home for a stay over Sunday. At this time I had worked later than usual to finish what I had begun and was somewhat belated in preparing for the "hike". Mrs. Frost, mistress of the household and tenants of the farm, tried hard to dissuade me from starting out so late in the evening. She said that at other times she had thought nothing about it but for some unaccountable reason, she was certain that I would be walking into danger if I made the trip tonight. But I told her I had travelled that road many times when coming home on the trains at night and had never seen anything unusual and gave her admonition no further thought.

The moon was bright and I enjoyed the walk in the cool evening air, in

contrast to the heat of the day before. When hearing Kilbourn and in passing through a deep ravine, which was heavily timbered, thus shutting off the light of the moon, I thought for the first time of Mrs. Frost's warning and concluded that if anything was to happen it would be here. But not taking her cautious advice very seriously, I passed along with very little more than my usual concern. I crossed the bridge over the little brook which ran through the valley at the foot of the hill, and up on to the table land into the full light of the moon again with a sigh of relief, thinking that the danger point was passed, for I had to admit to myself that the lady's unusual concern for my safety had produced a responsive anxiety in me.

At this point were three well traveled roads. The center having been turnpiked high for quite a distance over a low piece of ground and on either side. I took the right hand track and after going a little distance discovered what seemed to be the form of a man, standing way over to the left, beside the opposite track, and a few more paces revealed the certainty that it was a person. Just then he gave a loud shrill whistle through his fingers and started across the other roads until reaching the one I was in, when he turned and came toward me. About twenty or thirty rods beyond where he was standing were the forks of two roads, one leading up the river and the other to Dell Prairie and Big Spring from whence I had come, and the signal he had just given was meant no doubt for a pal on the other road, to give him notice that they had a victim and to be ready to come to his assistance if needed. I kept pace as it was too late to show the white feather, and when coming within speaking distance he called out: "Hello, where are you going?" "Oh!" I replied: "I am just going up town." But as soon as I had spoken and before he had drawn a weapon to demand a "stick-em-up", I noticed a sudden halt in his movements and his hand came down from his hip in a natural manner. Seeing that he was nonpulsed for some reason, I gathered courage to ask the same question, "Where are you going?" "Why, is this Mr. Landt", he asked, "and have you walked in from your farm tonight?" "Yes" I replied, "it is not much of a walk and I have done it many times before." He then asked if I didn't know him, giving his name, which I remembered as being that of a boy from the State School. "Well! well! Benny" I cried, "I am glad to see you again and where have you been all of these years?" We shook hands in a manner almost as if from kindred ties of friendship and had quite a very pleasant visit in recalling the old school-day happenings. He told me that he was working for a Mr. Buckminster, living up the river a mile or two, who I knew perfectly well, So after a little good advice in urging him to stay with the man he was now with, for they were nice people. I closed the interview, but he accompanied me back to the forks of the road before bidding me good night.

And so it happened that the bread I had cast upon the water returned after many days. But the poor fellow, through a hereditary desire, no doubt, to possess what belonged to others, overcame his better nature when not long afterward he and his pal robbed a store in Kilbourn. His pal was caught but he escaped by swimming the Wisconsin River.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

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At the end of my sixth year at the Institution, the Progressives or as they were later called "Radical Republicans" began to make their influence felt and I saw the inevitable result of their coming into power, so after the expiration of that term I was not a candidate for reappointment. Instead I went into the sheet metal work as Secretary of the Cream City Cornice Co. in North Milwaukee. I also took a ten year lease and purchased option of the Bilmore Apartments of sixty rooms and situated in Milwaukee. But after a five year period I sold my interests in the apartment, including the furniture and came back to Kilbourn for a short stay while building a barn and making other improvements on the farm. I returned to Milwaukee when the work was finished.

At this time the automobile business began to take prominence and we reorganized the Cream City Cornice Co. and incorporated as the Wisconsin Automobile Radiator Company but we still continued the sheet metal work. Strange to say, Henry Ford, was one of our first customers. We had never heard of the man before, but on investigation found that he had an assembly plant at Detroit, Michigan and was putting out the Ford car, the different parts of which were made by other companies. But it soon developed that to continue in the automobile part of our business and compete with the expensive stamping machines which large corporations were using would require more capital than I could or would be willing to invest. So I disposed of my interests and came out to Herman, Minnesota, and went into the creamery and general produce business including ice creams, with my son, Homer. He was an expert in that line, having learned the trade when a boy with the Elgin people of Illinois. I put him inside and took the road, soliciting and collecting, and am still at the work. We soon found our trade increased more rapidly from the North and after a time purchased another creamery at Casselton, North Dakota and organized the Herman-Casselton Creameries Inc. under which title we are now operating.

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*I have endeavored in the foregoing pages of this brief reminiscence, to record only the most important and outstanding incidents and those impressed so deeply in memory that they are ever in mind. And I have left for the discard and to be forgotten the undesirable and unimportant things that have occurred, of which in my long life there have been many. And I realize now, after this crude attempt to write a personal history and keep to the unexaggerated facts, how hard it is to present an interesting life story without a more resourceful subject. However, it has been done in a kindly spirit and I will not weary your patience further than with a few short stories,*

which did not find a place in the preceding record of current events. As in every life, some interesting experiences will occur equalling many of the thrilling episodes recorded in books of fiction, but after the thrill of excitement is over, they are practically dropped from the mind and seldom repeated, even to the family; so I append a few of these in a chapter of short stories.

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## SHORT STORIES

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### "POLOCK BILL" - AN INCORRIGIBLE PRISONER

Naturally, under the benign influences from the teachings of Humane Societies and from the high state of civilization of which our nation boasts, it would be extremely unpopular for the authorities to minimize or restrict the liberties now enjoyed by the unfortunate of our state institutions, especially including those where crimes are punished. But the question of playing the good Samaritan act in the treatment of prisoners, to the extent of converting jails and prisons into first class boarding houses, with band concerts and vaudeville, instead of the old time severity of rules and regulations, is causing much discussion at this time. For the wave of crime has seemingly increased in proportion to the clemency extended and the comforts of life provided in the prisons, until the law has no terror for the ordinary criminal. At the time of which I speak and at which the following incident occurred, crime was relatively small in proportion to the aggregate population and these acts of kindness were approved by the general public. But since the derelicts of humanity have filled the prisons and jails to overflowing, adding much to the already heavy burden of taxation, the public mind is fast realizing the influence these humane measures are having on the indolent classes and so they are now demanding a return to the more rigid system of punishment. For they believe that persons who deliberately choose the evil ways should accept the penalties imposed by the courts for their conduct, no matter how severe, as their sacrifice for the uplift of humanity and that the lesson from one swift and adequate punishment may save a dozen others from a like fate.

Still it cannot be denied that, in some cases, humane treatment makes for better discipline and conduct among inmates of a prison. This may be seen from the following incident which occurred while I was superintendent of the prisoners farm, at Waupun, Wisconsin. One of the most stubborn and hardened criminals of the place was known by the name of "Pollock Bill". He had been a sailor all of his life after leaving the parental roof, some where in Poland I suppose, but for a change had been working in the woods around Rhinelander, Wisconsin. He talked very broken English and when wanting to express himself as being successful, his favorite phrase would be, "Me jig em up, me jig em up". He was an expert at cards or any kind of gambling and

generally won out. He had such a quarrelsome disposition that he was always in trouble with his fellows and would fight at the least provocation, and although not a scientific boxer yet from his adhesive tendencies and bull dog grit, could never be conquered. From these undesirable qualities and a few authentic whispers from Rhinelander, it gave rise to a belief about the Institution, that the citizens of that place had "framed up" a case of arson and convicted him of burning a saw mill merely to relieve the community of his presence for a few years.

That he was an incorrivable, was evidenced by the flaming red suit he wore which signified dangerous character and not to be trusted outside the walls. There were three grades of prisoners designated by the style and color of their uniform. Plain gray denoted trustworthy and reliable; those wearing gray and black stripes could be trusted outside if they were under guard but the reds could be allowed no liberties whatever. The work on the farm was all done by the prisoners under guard and the surveillance of an overseer who always accompanied them from and back to the prison, and who watched them while working. During my stay I undertook and completed the work of tile draining a plat of land which on account of its miry condition, could not be used, even for hay. For the outlet of this, the tiling had to be laid across other lands about three-fourths of a mile to the Rock River, and it had to be laid quite deep in many places thus requiring a great deal of labor. But among the seven hundred inmates it was no trouble to find the suitable men.

One day when in the yard, Pollock Bill came up to me and asked to be taken out to the farm to work, saying, "Me be good". "Oh! no Bill", I replied, "they won't let you go". "Well, you try um" he answered, "me be good, you trust me". After several of these appeals I went to the warden with the case. At first he laughed at the idea of taking that incorrigible out on the farm and asked if I thought I could handle him out there, when they could do nothing with him inside. He told me that they had tried every way to conquer him, even to chaining him to the bars of his cell and turning the hose on him until he would say enough, but all to no purpose, he was the same Bill thereafter. After this description of his conduct, I admitted that I could do nothing with him against his will. "But, if what I hear is true" I continued, "that is that he is innocent of the crime of which he is charged, then I believe that he has turned all of his venomous spite and hatred against the whole institution, thinking everyone his enemy. But if he could find a friend or someone who would sympathize and intercede for his welfare, he might behave differently." Finally, after a little further consideration the warden said that if I would be responsible for his return I might try the experiment.

So, next morning, the train of workmen to the farm was represented by all the colors of the prison. I found Bill to be a fast worker but would not mix or have anything to do with the others, so I kept him by himself as much as possible. One day as we were going up to dinner we passed a large stone or boulder which had been left when clearing the land, because of its great size. "Why you leave this stone here?" Bill asked me. "Because its too heavy to move" I replied. "Me jig em up" he said. "What! you jig em up" I said, "In what way can you do anything with that heavy stone?" "Me

dig a hole, me bury him' he replie. This gave me a new thought in planning the work so he could be entirely by himself. I had heard of this process before and knew it to be very dangerous work, but after questioning him carefully I found that he had done much of that work in the Old Country and knew its dangers. Then to prevent accidents, I set him at work entirely by himself within range of many watchful eyes, although he did not know it. He continued the work until nearly every boulder on the farm was disposed of, which was as valuable as any other improvement that could have been made. He was still working at the farm when I received an order to send him in for a change of clothing and discharge from the prison.

A day or two afterwards, I saw a stylish team and carriage coming up the land and who did I see but Pollock Bill. I went out the gate and as I came up to the carriage he pulled up a big roll of bills to show me with the usual expression "Me jig em". It was a large roll and judging from the 10's and 20's, which could be seen from the outside it must have contained several hundred dollars. "Where have you kept this money?" I asked. "Oh! me hide em, they no find em." I knew that the prisoners suspected he must have money hidden somewhere and had been hunting for it high and low around the prison and the farm but now it seemed that with all their search they had not found it. After a short stay, he managed in his broken English to express his gratitude for the interest I had taken in him, and his last words as he left were, "I'll remember you." And as I later found out he did remember me. While living in Milwaukee some years later, I answered the door bell one afternoon and there stood Pollock Bill, in smiling mood to see me. He had come into port and through some means had learned that we were living in the city and had hunted me up. He had been on the ocean and lakes continually since leaving Waupun and told me he had been good and had saved his money. He also told me that he expected to quit the sea-faring life soon and buy a little home in the country - but not in Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

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#### HI' MASON

As the bravest of women are afraid of a mouse, so men who have proven their valor on the battle field by unflinchingly facing the charge, will sometimes give way to fright and alarm when suddenly brought face to face with a perilous situation which they had not considered. This happened to Hi' Mason, one time, a sixfooter who was, while in the army always selected for hazardous adventures with scouting parties when fighting the bushwhackers in Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, or for any other service requiring endurance and courage. As an example of this kind I will relate the following:

While our regiment was stationed at Larkinsville, Alabama to guard the Memphis and Charleston railroad, on our first advance over the country in 1862, I was asked to go on a detail which proved quite exciting. There was a report that a quantity of Rebel arms and ammunition were stored under the back kitchen floor of a house belonging to a widow in Bellfont. In reality she was not a widow but gave that impression, thinking that she would be safer

in the enemies hands as a widow than if the truth was known that she was the wife of an officer in the Rebel army. I was told to take as many men as I wished to accompany me and allowed to choose them. But I did not think the risk to be very great and only chose one - Hi' Mason. We had to go several miles by train to the station of Bellfont and walk the two or three miles out to the town, which was hidden under a hill and on the first bench of flat land next to the river. I had a good description of the house and a complete diagram of the arrangements of its rooms, so I had little trouble finding the place.

We of course were equipped with the best weapons in use at the time and were ready for any emergency that two fellows would be expected to handle, but we had not figured on getting into a town of this size. We could see at once that our safety must lie in their ignorance of what force might be behind us. So our work must be rapid and we must make a short stay. On arriving at the house, I left Hi' to guard the front entrance while I made the search. A middle-aged lady came to the door in response to my rapping of the brass knocker and as her flashing dark eyes beheld the blue uniform of a Yankee soldier, I could see plainly that I was an unwelcome visitor. But she tried hard to conceal her anger and dislike and to appear natural. And, with equal deception and feigned cordiality I introduced myself and made known the purpose of my visit. At this she very indignantly replied, in her Southern dialect, that nothing of the kind was in her possession or ever had been and the imputation was very unkind, and she continued with a flood of uncomplimentary words to which I had no time to listen. So I left her in the hall telling her that I was obliged to finish my errand. I found the back kitchen as described, with a loose floor from which I took up some boards and crawled under. The floor was not very high from the ground, so I had to crawl on hands and knees which made slow progress but I covered most of the ground and found nothing altho there were signs that some one had been under there recently. Suddenly I heard footsteps coming through the house and Hi' put his head below the floor and called in a low voice, "Landt, come out of there quick, they are coming from all directions." I was almost ready to give up my search anyway so I came out quickly, put down the boards and without appearing hasty, walked through the room and found Mrs. Brown in the hall where I had left her. I expressed my regrets of having been obliged to make the unpleasant call, but I had found nothing which proved the report to be untrue. I did not wait for her answer but went to join Hi' on the outside. A mob of forty or fifty had gathered around, of all descriptions, old men, women and children, a few in gray, who no doubt were disabled rebel soldiers. But not a word was spoken to us, and when we shouldered our guns to march away they gave us a wide berth and all we met coming to the scene would cross over and pass on the other side of the street. We kept up a moderate step until reaching the top of the hill, when our speed from there to the safety zone at the station would not I fear, be a credit to truly brave soldiers with their backs to the foe. But the brazen boldness in doing up the job and getting out before they had time to learn of the real situation was all that saved us. For had they known that we were not supported by some body of troops near we never would have left Bellfonte alive.

This incident and others of similar character in our army service together had kindled a friendship and trust in each other which always remained. But the crowning episode and the one I had in mind when I started this story happened

after the war and when we were both back in civil life. After the war we both settled on farms near to one another and naturally we continued our friendly relations and whenever one needed help the other was ready to assist.

I purchased a small tract of pine land near the head waters of the Yellow River in Wisconsin, soon after the war and expected to log some of it off the next winter and of course Hi' was the first one that came to my mind as a "stand-patter" to help along the enterprise. He was a good teamster and used to the woods and besides was an excellent carpenter. And this was just the sort of help I needed for a shanty had to be built and the camp arranged beforehand. So in early autumn, we made a trip to the place to select a site for a camp and to make an estimate of all our needs. We had taken a horse and buggy but finally the going became so rough that we were obliged to leave the horse with a farmer and make the last five or six miles on foot, taking with us only our guns, a few days rations and a couple of blankets. We had gone but little more than half way when we came to a newly built logging shanty, which appeared to have been used only the winter before and which looked very inviting to us. So as the sun was getting low, we concluded to stay over night, cook the two partridges we had killed on the way and be ready for an early start in the morning. So I said to Hi', "if you will take the little camp kettle and follow this path, I believe you will find a spring down in that ravine yonder and will be able to get some water. And while you are gone", I continued, "I will build a fire and cook the partridges for supper."

He had not been gone very long before I heard the most frightful yell ever given by a human being and the report of a gun followed immediately. I quickly grabbed my rifle and ran down the path to his assistance. At first I thought that he had shot himself, but remembering the yell preceded the report of the gun, I figured the yell and the fright must come from some other cause. I soon met him coming with an awe-stricken countenance and hastened to ask "What on the earth is the matter?" "Matter," he replied, "I guess if you had seen what I did you would think something was the matter. I would rather have met a regiment of Rebel soldiers than that infernal beast of a Lion cat." We went back for the water and I could see by his further explanations just how it all happened. The path led down to the bottom of the ravine and turned to the right, leading to a little spring over which leaned a tree that grew out from the bank on the opposite side. As he was in the act of bending over to dip up the water, his eyes met the glaring ones of a vicious panther or catamount only a few feet distant. It had its long tail swaying from side to side as it poised in the crotch of the tree, like a cat ready to spring upon its prey. We could find no evidence that Hi' had injured the animal and concluded that when the panther saw that he was discovered it changed its mind and jumped to one side, probably frightened by the vocal utterances and explosive fireworks from Hi'. It had landed about thirty feet away where it had torn up the ground with its long claws and from the next jump it would appear that he was about as badly frightened as Hi' himself.

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## A MIDNIGHT RIDE

In speaking of the experiences with wild animals, one might wonder how I have escaped coming in contact with some of them at one time or another. Especially with the black bear as numerous as they were in the early days in Wisconsin. But, while I have seen many I have been fortunate in keeping out of their clutches and as they are seldom aggressive, although they will fight if approached, I have had very little trouble with them. However, had I been alone one night, and lacking the keen sight and common horse "scent" which the horse I was riding possessed, I am sure that I would have walked straight into the arms of one that was sitting in the road, waiting for somebody to squeeze.

When I was a lad of thirteen or fourteen, my brother-in-law, Dexter Stone, was taken violently ill one night and the urgency of the case demanded a doctor immediately. The nearest one lived at Oxford, ten miles away, and I was sent for his services. A horse was procured for me and I started out very late in the evening for an all night ride. There was no moon and it was very dark but I knew the road well and apprehended no trouble in finding the way. All went well until I got within four miles of Oxford. I was approaching a small lake in a deep thickly wooded hollow and as I began descending the hill to pass through to the left of the lake, my horse suddenly stopped and began to paw the ground. "Who is there?", I shouted, but no answer. I shouted again with the same effect and the inky darkness ahead would yield no clue to what was obstructing the road. Again I urged the horse forward but she reared, turned around and ran back in spite of all I could do. But I finally turned her back and when coming to the same place she stopped again and I did not urge her further but began to figure out another way to reach Oxford and I finally thought of a cross road leading to one from Briggsville to Oxford on the other side of the lake. While thus meditating, whatever was in the road, ambled off down through the brush towards the lake with a noise suggesting that without question it was a bear. The road was now clear and the old mare went through those woods with flying speed until we reached Oxford but on coming back I let the doctor take the lead.

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## THE PENALTY FOR DISLOYALTY

I am passing now from stories which no doubt were more thrilling to the narrator at the time of performance than that of the reader, to one of a more serious nature and above all, one of the saddest things I have ever witnessed. This is a story which I did not relate before of the happenings while we were encamped at Murfreesboro.

An offense or crime against the military laws must be punished according to a decree from a court martial, when the perpetrator of the crime is found guilty. The mode of punishment is generally hanging for spies and shooting

for desertion, especially when going over to the enemy. While we were at Murfreesboro, there were three spies hung and one deserter, who belonged to our brigade, shot. He never could agree with his comrades and for some reason, deserted and went over to the enemy. During the battle of Stone River he was captured and brought back. The method used for those who were hung was the ordinary kind, a gibbet and collapsible platform. But the method of executing a deserter was designed to impress on the minds of all who were obliged to witness the seriousness of disloyalty.

On the day and hour appointed for the solemn program to be carried out, the first thing to be seen was the placing of a casket or coffin adjusted to a position ranging East and West. This was placed on the parade or drilling grounds. Then the brigade to which the prisoner belonged, consisting of the 10th. Wis. (our regiment), 33d. Ohio, 38th Ind. and the 2d. Ohio, in all numbering about three thousand men formed three sides of a hollow square around this coffin leaving the East side open. The firing squad next came and was placed a few paces West of the coffin, facing it to the East with loaded guns, except one or two which were blanks. At this moment a brass band, playing the death march, entered the opening, then came the prisoner with his guards. This little procession marched with grave solemnity to the doleful music, until they had marched past every regiment. Then the officer in charge took the prisoner and the guards stepped aside.

After the Chaplin had spoken a few words to him, which we could not hear, and offered a prayer, the officer directed the prisoner to kneel upon his coffin and face the firing squad. Intense silence prevailed for a moment or two. He was then blindfolded by a handkerchief and stepping to one side the officer gave the signal to fire. The report from the guns was simultaneous. The prisoner lunged forward into the coffin and his penalty was paid. Then each regiment, with its band playing a spirited march, returned to their quarters, and the bearers conveyed the body to a suitable place for burial.

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#### ORIGIN OF NAMES

In speaking of names we often wonder how so many different ones originated. It may have been by the abbreviations of lengthy ones, nicknames or the given or Christian names becoming surnames for the next generation and in a good many cases they were named after the estate whereon they were born.

My own name, being so very unwieldy, it was essential that an abbreviation or nickname be used, so the second syllable was adopted and I have always been called Phrone Landt or Uncle Phrone. Uncle, because it happened to be my lot to appear at the foot of a large family and had a nephew and a niece older than I and nearly the same age as Mrs. Landt. And while Mrs. Landt's name was Margaret, she was called Maggie and we have answered to the names of Uncle Phrone and Aunt Maggie all our lives.

In looking over the papers one morning the following item attracted my

attention: "Being an octogenarian does not much interfere with the activities of Rev. C. N. Stocking, D.D., Pastor of Willoughby Ridge Church, Northeastern Ohio Conference also Chaplain of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland. He was a private in the 105th Ohio and was wounded at Perryville Oct. 8th, 1862. He was then reported killed but is yet very much alive; so much so that youngsters of 50 or 60 find it hard to keep up with him. Here is a sample of what he crams into one day. On a recent Sunday, he traveled by rail and auto 100 miles, addressed and sang before two Sunday Schools and two Epworth Leagues and preached two sermons. He is actively engaged in church work, lecturing, etc. and in addition to the above, songs and addresses are frequently called for at meetings of G.A.R. Posts and Masonic Lodges."

Thinking that this man might be a descendant from the Stocking after whom I was named, I wrote him the following letter:

Rev. C. N. Stocking, D.D.  
Pastor, Willoughby Church

Dear Comrade:

I noticed in the National Tribune the account of you being a member of the 105th. Ohio and that you were in the battle of Perryville. I am also an octogenarian and was in the same battle of Perryville, Oct. 8th. 1862, in the 10th. Wisconsin Infantry, 1st. Div. 14th. Army Corps and our regiment lost 54% of the men engaged. All killed or wounded in the terrible fighting of that day.

Now what attracted my attention particularly to this item was your name and your being a minister. Were any of your uncles or older kinsmen by the name of Sophronius Stocking, filling the mission of a Methodist minister on the frontier of Wisconsin in an early day, say from 1836 to 1842? Such a man was highly esteemed by the people at that time and quite a number selected his name for their boys, hoping by so doing they might emulate some of his notable characteristics. My folks in particular wanted to do everything possible for me, seeing that I was the youngest of ten children and probably would always be the baby of the family, didn't want any good thing to slip by, so they gave me the full name, Schpronius Stocking Landt.

I have admired their judgment and have really tried to keep the name above reproach though for convenience and economy of time and space in attaching it to documents in business matters and every day use, have eliminated all but the initials and am generally known and sign on the "dotted line" as S. S. Landt.

I would be greatly pleased to have a reply from you and whether you are or not a kin to the Rev. Sophronius Stocking of pioneer fame in Wisconsin, I will be glad to meet you at the National Encampment of the G.A.R. at Milwaukee, Wis. Sept. 4th. next and whatever may have been our fortunes or misfortunes to enjoy or endure through the many long years since we fought together for the preservation of the Union, we should be friends and comrades still. Hoping to meet you at Milwaukee, I am

Sincerely yours,

S. S. Landt.

The following is a part of a long and very interesting letter I received from him soon after his receiving mine:

Churdil Wickliff, Ohio  
7/17/23

Mr. Sophronius Stocking Landt  
Casselton, North Dakota

My Dear Comrade:

How good it is that we two octogenarians have been spared thus long and are now so providentially permitted to come into communication with each other.

Yes; we were near each other at Perryville, Ky. My cousin John K. Stocking and I were both wounded and reported killed; each supposed the other was dead. We two dead boys met the next morning at the field hospital. He recovered and went with Sherman to the sea. Measles took me to the pest house and after months of suffering and transferring from hospitals in Kentucky to Camp Denison, Ohio, I was discharged and brought home on a cot by my father. I was able to enter Alleghena College on crutches the following September.

With you I hope we may come nearer together at Milwaukee in September. My great grandfather's brother was Jeremiah Stocking, and he had twelve children, the christian names of all beginning with the letter "S". Sophronius was one of them. He was long a member of the Rock River Conference and died at Beloit, Wisconsin, while I was pursuing my theological studies at Garrett Biblical Institute at Evanston, Ill.

Glad you have the name Sophronius Stocking - write again.

C. H. Stocking

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#### WHAT BECAME OF THE WILD PIGEON

The wanton cruelties, greed for gain, and the complete disregard for the public welfare have been responsible for the thinning out, and in many cases the complete annihilation of some of the most valuable game birds and animals which swarmed over the country in the earlier days when on every bright spring morning could be heard the chanting notes of the myriads of fowls, from the crowing prairie hen to the honking of wild geese and crane. The whistling quail and drumming partridges, filled the air with their wild and rustic melodies to which one could listen in wondering delight. The harmonious assemblage of so many kinds of fowl that gathered in the woods and around the marshes and ponds was interesting and satisfying to the early settlers, and the overhead flights of the millions of wild pigeons to their nesting place outnumbered them all combined.

But now the voices of those feathered friends are stilled and the flights of the wonderful wild pigeons are gone forever. The Indians, it seems were peers to the white men who have succeeded them, in preserving game, for they

only killed what they needed for food instead of slaughtering by wholesale for the all-mighty dollar. Just how long those pigeons inhabited the country is not known, but before these lands were settled we have this account of them by Andrew Barnaby in his "Travels Through The Middle Settlements of North America in 1759" when he went to Boston from Providence. The journey took all day but it was an interesting day for Mr. Barnaby because he "observed prodigious flights of wild pigeons." From this we may safely assume that they had made this continent their home for many centuries or they could not have increased to the incredible numbers found by our earliest settlers.

And in my experiences in farming they were the most plentiful of all fowl. The cause of their utter extinction has been in controversy for some time and I think the prevailing sentiment now is that in one of their flights a storm has swept them into the sea. But I beg to differ from that opinion. I lived at a time when they first began to decrease in numbers and had an opportunity to study the cause. In the first place the habits of all wild creatures have been the means of their safety or their destruction, according to their nature. And from my long acquaintance with those valuable and harmless birds, I found them to be the most susceptible to the ravages of the unscrupulous hunter, of all the game birds of the land.

They were not wild like other game and all assembled at one point for nesting where it was said and I believe it to be true, every pigeon on the continent would be present, for I have seen flocks in which there would be millions and they would fairly darken the sky in going to their nesting grounds, which would always be in the same locality every year. Sometimes in Canada and most always in a large area of jack pine forest they made their nesting place. At two different years they selected their nesting grounds within five miles of our place in Wisconsin where I had opportunities to note one of the main causes of their ultimate annihilation. After the railroads were built throughout the country and whenever the location of their nesting place was heralded among the people, every hunter of the land, would hasten to the spot with nets and every conceivable device for killing them and shipping them to market. To visit one of those nesting places presented a sight to behold. The flutter of wings, squawking of pigeons and cacklings to their young, all blended into a continuous roar. Every branch of the trees were loaded with nests to almost the breaking point and many times as the squabs grew heavier the limb would either break or bend until they were ejected from the nest to the ground. It was here that the covetous hunter did most of the work of destruction by setting large hoop nets and catching them by the thousands. They would find some place between the trees where they could set the net baiting with some kind of grain and when crowded full by pulling a cord or rope, the catch was theirs, sometimes from fifty to a hundred, and when they disposed of another was ready. But this was not all the cruel part, as most of those that were killed had young that must perish for want of food. Is it any wonder that they have vanished from the earth? And again, one of the unfortunate traits or habits of theirs was that they would seldom light in leafy trees but would select a dry one in the open if possible, and finally when the last lonely pigeon was left to mourn the fate of his race, he would be found sitting on a protruding dry limb as a target for the hunter and could be seen a half mile away.

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## A DAY OF RUNAWAYS

Perhaps one of the most miraculous escapes from injury and an incident that would confirm the belief that providence sometimes does take a hand in human affairs by shielding as in many ways or in giving aid to our worthy endeavors, occurred while filling a contract to bank a thousand cords of wood along the tracks of the Milwaukee road soon after the Civil War, at Kilbourn, Wisconsin. The timber from which this supply was to come, grew on an oak ridge three to four miles East of town with a slightly descending grade nearly all the way, making it an easy haul. Comfortable log shanties had been arranged and a man and wife employed for cooks, and the choppers were already to work. But a few more supplies had to be hauled out, so this particular morning I hitched my team to a wagon with a box on it and started for town. The morning was bright and frosty, and the horses were feeling fine not having done much for some time waiting for snow. But the ground was frozen very hard and smooth. After reaching a point about a half mile from the business part of the city, the off horse, picked up his ears and started as if frightened by something unusual and I surged heavily on the lines to check his speed. I made but little impression however and discovered that the harness was not properly adjusted to the wagon for when I did my best I could pull it on their heels and they would run the faster. So my only way was to keep them in the road and do the best I could. But a turn must be made or we would run into the Wisconsin River where the solid rocky banks were 30 to 40 feet high above the water. They were now running their best and while I was considering the possibility of making a successful turn and avert a certain death by the river rout, from some cause the reach became uncoupled which released the hind wheels and when the rear end of the box hit the ground, the hard jolt with my heavy pulling broke the left line and turned the horses out of the road and astride of an oak tree which, from the speed we were making, when the cross lines, breast straps and neck yoke hit the tree, it brought their heads down and they both turned a complete somersault, landing on their backs with heads towards the wagon and nearly stripped of their harness. I was on my feet much sooner than they were and expected to find them badly hurt. But they soon got up without assistance though they appeared to be quite badly stunned from the heavy fall or bewildered from the somersault and made no move to get away, but stood trembling and putting their heads together, each gave a little whicker, as if to ask "Where are we?" By this time a crowd had gathered with several horse men among it, all of whom agreed that the horses had sustained no injuries and not a scratch could be found on them. As for myself, I felt immune from any evil results and was so thankful for the service of the providential hand that uncoupled the reach.

After dinner I was ready for home with my supplies and this time was sure to have everything in proper shape. They drove very nicely all the way and on reaching camp I found the water barrels empty and as there was plenty of time before supper, to get the water, I unloaded the supplies and put the barrels in the wagon. We hauled the water from a spring over the ridge nearly a mile over a private road leading through the woods where the men were cutting the timber. After filling the barrels and starting for camp, on reaching the top of the hill the off horse performed just as he did in the morning and started to run. I was ready this time and expected to set him back easily though had but little effect. The water began spurting upward which

frightened the horses more and I was in for another runaway in spite of all I could do. However there was this less danger that there was no river to run into and if I could keep them in the road they would soon tire out. But when I got where the men had felled a tree across the road the idea of getting around this safely was impossible. And in making the effort the hind wheel hit the stump throwing me out and the horses went on through the woods with the forward wheels of the wagon. The timber was not very thick and they ran some little distance before coming to a large stump with the butt log of the tree still lying as it fell. The horses just missed the stump but when the wheel struck, it swayed the tongue of the wagon to the right with such force as to trip the off horse over the log on his back and pulled the other one over on top of the pile, nearly on his back also. I got to them as soon as possible but none too soon to save the under one from choking to death by a strap and as I happened to have a sharp knife he was soon relieved. By this time the choppers were all there helping to straighten things up again and found that no damage had been done except to the harness and wagon. But the humiliating knowledge of my being so utterly incapable of handling that team made me ready to resign that position immediately. Yet I believe I was about as strong as most men who handle horses and there must be some undiscovered sequel to this affair and when understood, what now seemed to be undisputed facts will be shown in a different light.

It was now about supper time and the men led the horses down to the stables. I was standing beside the door which was quite low and when one of the men led a horse in, he had forgotten to uncheck it and when the horse went to put his head down to go in, I noticed the bit did not come back into his mouth as it should, but was kept by a short nose piece or strap from one bit ring over his nose to the other, giving exactly the same service as of a halter when pulling on the rein. The horses had been thoroughly trained to the bit the winter before by a rig owned by a horse trainer and after changing to these bridles they had been worked very hard through the summer and not having been frightened did not care to use more speed than their work required. But now I had been feeding them up for the heavy work ahead and they were being driven by a halter.

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#### WINTER BAPTISMS

There was a time when the churches thought as much if not more of having their fancied creeds or dogmas preached as the real Christian religion. And many times caused their Pastors and converts to undergo a real danger and almost torture to satisfy the tenets of the church.

This was proven to my mind when quite young by the following circumstances. We lived three miles from a Baptist church at Dell Prairie corners, around which was quite a large community of that same denomination. One winter they held special meetings, resulting in a number of conversions and according to their belief it would be risky to allow much time to elapse before they should be baptized, notwithstanding it was mid-winter and zero weather. Accordingly a committee was appointed to select a suitable place for their immersion as no other form would answer. We lived within about forty rods of a mill pond of clear spring water with low banks, easy of approach and

with a gradual slope. The committee visited us and obtained permission of Father to use our place in which to prepare for the ordeal and to change the clothing of the converts after the ceremony of baptism had been performed. The day was then set and we lost no time in getting things ready. The committee said there would be about eight or ten to be baptized. It fell to my lot to keep the fires going which I was pleased to do. The big fireplace in the living room would take in wood four to six feet long and when filled with dry oak it made a hot fire. This, with a hot stove in the kitchen, we thought would make a desirable place to come to after a dip in the icy water. Some men came over in the forenoon of the appointed day, with saw and axe to cut a hole in the ice ten or twelve feet square where the water was about midwaist deep and all was ready.

The teams began coming about two o'clock and for all it being a pretty cold day, a big crowd gathered for the novelty of the scene. But as soon as the last rite was performed, they disappeared as quickly as they came excepting the attendants who stayed until all were made comfortable in the new change of clothing.

And, again, many years later we were called upon to administer to the wants of one who had been immersed with different motives and under entirely different circumstances. After I was married and had taken over the old homestead, we were sitting by the same old fireplace one cold winter evening with the table drawn up to the hearth. Mrs. Landt was seated on one side with her knitting and I was on the other reading the papers and enjoying the full pleasures of a home, after the toilsome labors of the day. Suddenly there was a heavy knock at the door. Upon opening it there stood a neighbor who lived some two miles west. He was bareheaded and partly stooped with his arms hanging away from his body and as wet as a drowned rat. His cousin Dan was with him. "Could a fellow come in and get warm?" he asked. "Why surely", I replied, "come in, but what on earth has happened?" They both came in and as he stood by the fire warming his shivering body, Dan proceeded to tell me the story.

They had gone to Portage, fifteen miles the day before with an ox team and load of grain on a wagon. There was very little snow and as the ground was frozen hard the wheeling was good. It appeared that they had imbibed a little too freely at the saloons while in town and when coming home, Mike became unable to sit on the seat. So he laid down in the bottom of the wagon and covered up to sleep off the effects. Dan did the driving although he was in much the same condition "spiritually" as Mike. The oxen had not been given water since leaving home the day before so when they came to the spring brook which never freezes, in spite of all Dan could do, they left the road and ran down quite a steep bank into the creek for a drink. After their thirst was quenched there was no other way of getting them out than by driving them through and up the bank on the other side. This would have been alright except that unfortunately the end gate had been lost out of the wagon and when it went out of the water on the other side at an angle of about forty-five degrees, Mike slid out head first into the creek, the water being about waist high. After thawing out and warming up I fitted him out with one of my suits, with dry overcoat, wool hat and a shawl to tie around his ears and they were off for home.

At another time in early spring, when the snow had all melted away due to the heavy rains and frozen up again making the roads very rough, we had another experience. Again we were sitting around the same hearth at evening when we heard a rustling at the door. After waiting for a moment expecting to hear a rap, but none came. I went out to see what was there and as I opened the door a man pushed by me into the house. He was in his stocking feet and without a hat. He rushed around the room as if trying to escape from some imaginary object, saying "there he is, there he is, can't you see him?" Then he would dodge around me for protection for by time he and I were the only ones left in the room. The others had all taken a sudden departure. But from the first I knew his trouble though I had never before seen a person with Delirium Tremens. These spells only lasted a little while when he would relax into almost a stupor until another attack. Then he would go through the same performance. He looked like a man of good intelligence and was dressed in a good business suit, although it was somewhat soiled. He had no money and would not talk, so I could form no idea as to who he was or where he had come from but imagined that he had come from either Kilbourn or Portage. From his reticence and some of his later movements I concluded that for some reason he did not want to be identified, for his speech, in good English, proved that he could talk if he wished. We made a bed on the floor for him to lie on when in his rational moments and I stayed up with through the night, which gave me time to plan what to do with my strange guest.

After breakfast I rigged him out with some shoes which were somewhat too large, but by filling the space with soft woolen socks, they fitted, then a soft wool hat and he looked very comfortable when I started with him to the town chairman, Mr. Phillips. It was only a mile away so we walked and he seemed alright until we came to the mill where several were working in repairing the dam. At a moment when my attention was called by a question from one of the men, my strange friend made a sudden dash for the pond and dove in head first. With the help at hand we had but little trouble in getting him out, though he fought his best to keep his head under water and drown. From my experience with him so far, I concluded it best to have some help for the balance of the way and arranged with one of these men to go with us. We had no further trouble. I learned afterwards that he was taken to the County Hospital and they finally located his relatives.

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#### THE LOVE OF HOME

I think perhaps there is nothing more appealing to the human mind, after our devious wanderings through life, than the irresistible yearnings of home. And the frequent glimpses of the earlier days, their pleasures and their cares, their loves and hopes add much to our desire that some day we may return, if only for a limited time to recall the memories of friends and scenes of long ago. And in this love of home as in the possession of life itself, the wild and domestic creatures are equally endowed with those compelling emotions as ourselves. Even the fish are none the less equal in this loyalty to their native home. The salmon, bred and born on the pebbly bottom at the head waters of the beautiful Columbia River will wander down to the ocean and have been seen a thousand miles from their native shores, but if not caught by the

fisherman's snare, or having met with some other untimely end, they will always return to their birth place to die.

When a boy I helped a mother robin to raise her little family of four by digging worms and dropping them into their little mouths and as they grew up they valued my presence with something for them, nearly as much as did the domestic fowls of the yard. But at the first cold blast of Autumn and the warning call of that mysterious guide called instinct, they flew to their Southern home. They returned in the early spring piping and warbling their cheery songs of glee. I knew they were the same, because they knew me and were even tame. But the most pathetic incident I have ever known of a domestic animal expressing loyalty for home was by a two week visit by Dolly, the first horse I ever owned, and who I bought as a colt.

I mated her up with one of the same color and they made a fine team for driving though too light for heavy work around the farm. When fair time came I entered them as a carriage team and drew first premium. I sold them for a good price. Several years later as we were sitting at the dinner table, I looked through the open door and saw a white horse standing at the barn. When going out as I opened the gate it turned and with a little whinny came up to me. I hardly knew her at first she had grown so white, but by the shape of her head and her familiar actions I knew it was Dolly. I called for Mamma. We gave her a regular family greeting. When I opened the stable door she went straight for her stall and I assure you I was not long in supplying her with oats. It was two weeks before her owner came to investigate a notice I had put in the Kilbourn paper. He lived east of Baraboo, and twenty odd miles directly south of our place, across the river. He had turned the pair out to grass and while watching them, Dolly suddenly jumped the fence and started North. He had searched for her both at Kilbourn and Portage, the only two places there were bridges across the river, so we finally concluded she had swam the river to get back to her old home.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

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There are very few persons, even of ordinary minds and abilities who do not have aspirations, daydreams or visions of what they would like to do, and the final goal they would like to reach and their ultimate happiness will depend upon the nature of the vision and the manner in which their success is obtained. But whatever course we may have decided to follow, in the hopes of reaching our end, disappointments are sure to come and if we have not formed a habit of taking pleasure in our work, the joy of life will have lost its charm and what could have been pleasant employment in the discouraging times will seem to be menial drudgery and will perhaps take our minds from the higher points of endeavor to which we once aspired. In prescribing a help for a person at these times a few words of Dr. Francis L. Patton to a crowd of seminary students would seem the most appropriate: "Keep up your spiritual contact. There is a friend walking on the troubled waters saying 'Be of Good Cheer'. His commendation is always forthcoming and satisfying."

By this keeping up of our spiritual contact, much of the sting is taken out of adversity and we are permitted to be more optimistic and more able to keep up the cheerful appearance which counts for so much in business affairs. And yet, one may find by experience that even though we have appealed for Divine assistance and failed in some of our expected achievements and after we have convinced ourselves that we have not been negligent in our duties according to the light and knowledge revealed to us, and that we have "kept the faith" we cannot see why we should call the failure a blessing. But He only knows. And in the adversity, the consolation of having done our part and that our vision and hopes beyond are still bright, will relieve us of many an unbidden tremulous sigh in that deep drawn breath as we turn our thought to the unpleasant past.

It may be true, that had we not asked for His Divine assistance in these worldly objects and acted only as our independent and selfish motives directed - as many have done - that through the laws which govern the material things of earth, we might have succeeded to great wealth and position at the expense of future rewards. But the fact of our possessing so much unregenerated human nature that we cannot always be trusted in times of prosperity to keep our spiritual relations at par, as we are but infants in the great creation and endless eternity, why should not our Heavenly Father withhold from us the things He knows will be stumbling blocks in our upward progress.

In meeting with the various conditions confronting us all the way through life, and in considering their advantages and their disadvantages, we are at a loss many times to know just what to do. We do not know what line of business to follow or what associations to accept or reject, knowing full well that an improper estimate of the influences they may exert on our future lives and habits will perhaps lead us to failure and ultimate ruin. Whereas had we taken another course, though not as attractive at first, it would have beckoned us on to golden opportunities, through which to secure a life of happy contentment.

But as the years advance, we come to know ourselves better and realize how impossible it is to cope with the evils that beset us on every hand, unless we have Divine assistance. And, while, I am not parading as an example; for I have been lax many times in my Christian duties and have fallen far below the "mark of the high calling"; still I want to point out from a long life of experiences that the promise of forgiveness to the number of "seventy times seven" and my implicit faith in Him who died for us on Mount Calvary, has always been the magnet to draw me back to the narrow way, and to a feeling of security which nothing else can give. The material treasures of this world are of but little value compared to a substantial credit on the other side and we, like King Tut, can take none of our coveted treasures beyond the tomb. For it is only a certified check on our account Over There - one written indelibly on our immortal minds, our souls or our ethereal personages; it matters not in what form we may appear - will pay the price of our admittance.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### RETROSPECTIVE THOUGHTS WHEN ON MY LAST VISIT TO THE OLD HOME, BEFORE COMPLETING THIS MANUSCRIPT

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It was my custom, whenever possible to get away from business affairs, to always make a trip to the Big Spring cemetery on Decoration Day each year for the purpose of tidying up the family lot and decking it with flowers. And when I have not found it possible to go I have arranged with other parties to perform the hallowed services. The cemetery as you know, is located on a little hill, because of the sandy soil and the nearness to the church. When the cemetery was laid out my Father, for some reason, was given the choice of the first lot and naturally he selected one on the highest point, which gives a commanding view of the surrounding country. It had been two years since my last visit to the place and somehow my presence at this time seemed to have a deeper significance than at other times previous. Although I was in good health, I could not suppress the thought that from my advancing age, being in my 84th year, that these visits in the future must be few.

It was a beautiful day. All nature, everywhere, was smiling in her gaudy apparel of Spring. The bright sun revealed the variegated colors on the hillsides, the green meadows and the cultivated fields, the humming of bees and songs of birds, all combined to give back the memories of other days. And after finishing the task, I sat down on the curb of three-fourths of a century ago, when as a boy of seven, I had landed with my parents at a little cabin just over there on that little hillock, now to relieve the friendly Indians who had been guarding our claim until our arrival. On looking to the West, I could see the realistic picture of the farm and home which I had dreamed of and imagined when a young man. It was the product of nearly forty years of toilsome efforts with the forces of nature and during all that time had provided me with a happy home. Those stately elms I see over yonder, emoluments of the care and the labor I performed in packing them out of the swamp on my back to beautify the home we once enjoyed so much. They are still in their prime and for an age will be monuments to the pioneers who developed this little valley and a tribute to those who follow. The little brook still gurgles by to join the larger one that swings around to the East, through the proverbial bonnets on the girls, we boys would go them one better in trying to force the coming of Spring by taking a plunge into the icy pool - sometimes before the snow had all disappeared from the drifts along the higher bank of the stream.

And now after passing these eighty odd milestones of life, I turn my thoughts backward through the vista of the swiftly passing years: Each bringing new joys and sorrows; New friendships made and old friends departing; New opportunities for worthy achievements and the ever present gauntlet of alluring sinful follies, of which by the grace of God, I have escaped a few. And as we call for the friends who have been our companions through life - They do not answer - They have passed to the other side. So I begin to realize that I am getting old and it will not be long before I shall be called to the side of her who sleeps beneath this monument of stone, and from the

faith we have always cherished in His promise that we shall live again, it should not be hard, after these lonely years since her demise, for me to answer the call. No words of praise can express the true value of the love and unselfish devotion she gave to her family, and in her passing she could have left no greater legacy than the hallowed memories of those maternal sacrifices and her sweet companionship during all of those fifty two years she lived with us. And the God given hope of meeting her again some day will be an abiding pleasure while life shall last and an inspiration for us to so live and shape our lives that we will be worthy of acceptance when our Heavenly Father calls us home. In closing the following hopeful thought, suggested by George D. Printice in "Mans Higher Destiny" seem most pertinent:

"It cannot be, that the earth is mans only abiding place.  
It cannot be, that our life is a mere bubble cast up by  
eternity,  
To float a moment on its waves and then sink into nothingness.  
Else why is it that the glorious aspirations which leap  
like Angels from the temple of our hearts are forever wandering  
unsatisfied?  
Why is it that all the stars that hold their festival around  
the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited  
faculties, forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory.  
And, finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty  
presented to our view, are taken from us, leaving the thousand  
streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon  
our hearts.  
There is a realm where the rainbow never fades.  
Where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that  
slumber in the ocean, and where the beautiful beings which  
now pass before us like shadows, will stay in our presence  
forever."

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*S. S. Landt died October 12, 1926  
at Herman, Minnesota  
He is buried at Big Spring, Wisconsin*