# The Light in the Clearing

A TALE of the NORTH COUNTRY in the TIME of SILAS WRIGHT

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### BARTON LEARNS OF THE EXISTENCE OF A WONDER-FUL POWER KNOWN AS "MONEY."

Synopsis.—Barton Baynes, an orphan, goes to live with his uncle, Peabody Baynes, and his Aunt Deel on a farm on Rattleroad, in a neighborhood called Lickitysplit, about the year 1826. He meets Sally Dunkelberg, about his own age, but socially of a class above the Bayneses, and is fascinated by her pretty face and fine clothes. Barton also meets Roving Kate, known in the neighborhood as the "Silent Woman." Amos Grimshaw, a young son of the richest man in the township, is a visitor at the Baynes home and Roving Kate tells the boys' fortunes, predicting a bright future for Barton and death on the gallows for Amos. Reproved for an act of boyish mischief, Barton runs away, intending to make his home with the Dunkelbergs. He reaches Canton and falls asleep on a porch. There he is found by Silas Wright, Jr., a man prominent in public affairs, who, knowing Penbody Baynes, takes Barton home after buying him new clothes. Silas Wright evinces much interest in Barton and sends a box of books and magazines to the Baynes home. A short time later the election of Mr. Wright to the United States senate is announced.

#### CHAPTER V.

The Great Stranger

and the like and their coming filled pass their house, hurried over for a me with a joy which mostly went look at it. Every hand was on the way with them, I regret to say. None stove as we tenderly carried it into these, however, appealed to my the house, piece by piece, and set it importantion as did old Kate. But up. Then they cut a hole in the up-How curiously we looked at him, the room! knowing his fame and power! This When the Axtells had gone away great stranger was Money.

I shall never forget the day that a little shiny, gold coin and three they lay in my hands and presently as we have." was my uncle's answer. put them back into his wallet. That was long before the time of which I say, one day of that year, when I answered. asked him to take us to the Caravan of Wild Beasts which was coming to the village:

"I'm sorry, but it's been a hundred Sandays since I had a dollar in my wallet for more than ten minutes." I have his old account book for turned out badly. the years of 1837 and 1838. Here are some of the entries:

Sold ten bushels of wheat to E. Miner at 90 cents, to be paid in goods.

and took his note for \$6, payable in boots on or before March the first." balance from a neighbor.

Be it will be seen that a spirit of mutual accommodation served to help us over the rough going. Mr. Grimshaw, however, demanded his pay in cash and that I find was mainly the habit of the money-lenders.

We were poor but our poverty was not like that, of these days in which I am writing. It was proud and cleanly and well-fed. Our fathers had seen heroic service in the wars and we knew it.

I was twelve years old when I begas to be the reader for our little family. Aunt Deel had long complained that she couldn't keep up with her knitting and read so much. We had not seen Mr. Wright for nearly two years, but he had sent us the movels of Sir Walter Scott and I had hed them heart deep into the creed hattles of Old Mortality.

Then came the evil days of 1837, when the story of our lives began to enicken its pace and excite our interest in its coming chapters. It gave es enough to think of, God knows.

Wild speculations in land and the American paper-money system had brought us into rough going. The banks of the city of New York had suspended payment of their notes. They could no longer meet their engagements. As usual, the burden fell heaviest on the poor. It was hard to that he was unusually wrought up. money even for black salts.

Uncle Peabody had been silent and depressed for a month or more. He had signed a note for Rodney Barnes, a cousin, long before and was afraid that he would have to pay it. I didn't know what a note was and I remember that one night, when I lay thinking about it, I decided that it must be something in the nature of horse rolle. My uncle told me that a note was a trouble which attacked the beain instead of the stomach.

One autumn day in Canton Uncle Peabody traded three sheep and twenbushels of wheat for a cook stove and brought it home in the big wagon. Rodney Barnes came with him to help set up the stove. He was a big glant of a man with the longest nose in the manship. I have often wondered how may one would solve the problem of kissing Mr. Barnes in the immediate negion of his nose, the same being in

he nature of a defense. That evening I was chiefly interwas to no with its damper and grid terest."

dles and high oven and the shiny edge on its hearth! It rivaled, in its novelty and charm, any tin peddler's cart Some strangers came along the that ever came to our door. John these days-hunters, peddlers Axtell and his wife, who had seen it

there was one stranger greater than | per floor and the stone chimney and she greater indeed, than any other fitted the pipe. How keenly we who came into Rattleroad. He came watched the building of the fire. How rarely and would not be long detained. quickly it roared and began to heat

Aunt Deel said: "It's grand! It is sartin-but I'm my uncle showed me a dollar bill and | 'fraid we can't afford it—ayes I be!" "We can't afford to freeze any pieces of silver, nor can I forget how longer. I made up my mind that we carefully he watched them while couldn't go through another winter

"How much did it cost?" she asked. "Not much differ'nt from thirtyam writing. I remember hearing him four dollars in sheep and grain," he

> Rodney Barnes stayed to supper and spent a part of the evening with

> Like other settlers there, Mr. Barnes was a cheerful optimist. Everything looked good to him until it

He told how he had heard that it was a growing country near the great "Balanced accounts with J. Doro- water highway of the St. Lawrence. and gave him my note for \$2.15 Prosperous towns were building up to be paid in salts January 1, 1838. in it. There were going to be great cities in Northern New York. There were rich stores of lead and iron "Sold two sheep to Flavius Curtis in the rocks. Mr. Barnes had bought two hundred acres at ten dollars an acre. He had to pay a fee of five Only one entry in more than a per cent. to Grimshaw's lawyer for hundred mention money, and this was the survey and the papers. This left the sum of eleven cents received in him owing fourteen hundred dellars on his farm-much more than it was

> Our cousin twisted the poker in his great hands until it squeaked as he stood before my uncle and said:

> "My wife and I have chopped and burnt and pried and hauled rocks an' shoveled dung an' milked an' churned until we are worn out. For almost twenty years we've been workin' days an' nights an' Sundays. My mortgage was over-due, I owed six hundred dollars on it. I thought it all over one day an' went up to Grimshaw's an' took him by the back of the neck and shook him, He said he would drive me out o' the country. He gave me six months to pay up. I had to pay or lose the land. I got the money on the note that you signed over in Potsdam. Nobody in Canton would 'a' dared to lend it to

"Why?" my uncle asked.

"'Fraid o' Grimshaw. He didn't want me to be able to pay it. The place is worth more than six hundred dollars now-that's the reason. I intended to cut some timber an' haul it to the village this winter so I could pay a part o' the note an' git more time as I told ye, but the roads have been so bad I couldn't do any haul-

My uncle went and took a drink at the water pail. I saw by his face

"My heavens an' earth!" he exclaimed as he sat down again. "It's the brain colic," I said to

myself as I looked at him. Mr. Barnes seemed to have it also.

"Too much note," I whispered. "I'm awful sorry, but I've done everything I could," said Mr. Barnes. "Ain't there somebody that'll take another mortgage?-it ought to te safe now," my uncle suggested.

"Money is so tight it can't be done. The bank has got all the money an' Grimshaw owns the bank., I've tried and tried, but I'll make you safe. I'll give you a mortgage until I can turn 'round."

So I saw how Rodney Barnes, like other settlers in Lickitysplit, had gone into bondage to the landlord.

"How much do you owe on this place?" Barnes asked. "Seven hundred an' fifty dollars," said my uncle.

"Is it due?" "It's been due a year an' if I have ested in the stove. What a joy it to pay that note I'll be short my in-

"God o' Israel! I'm scairt," said Uncle Peabody. Down crashed the stick of wood

into the box. "What about?"

"It would be like him to put the screws on you now. You've got between him an' his prey. You've taken the mouse away from the cat."

I remember the little panic that fell on as then. I could see tears in the eyes of Aunt Deel as she sat with her head leaning wearily on her

"If he does I'll do all I can," said Barnes, "whatever I've got will be

Rodney Barnes left us, and I remember how Uncle Peabody stood in the middle of the floor and whistled the merriest tune he knew.

"Stand right up here," he called in his most cheerful tone. "Stand right up here before me, both o' ye." I got Aunt Deel by the hand and

led her toward my uncle. We stood facing him. "Stand straighter," he demanded. "Now, altogether. One, two, three, ready-sing." He beat time with his hand in imi-

tation of the singing master at the schoolhouse and we joined him in singing an old tune which began: "Oh, keep my heart from sadness, God."

This irresistible spirit of the man bridged a bad hour and got us off to bed in fairly good condition.

A few days later the note came due and its owner insisted upon full payment. There was such a clamor for money those days! I remember that eggs and chickens. She had planned to use it to buy a tombstone for her mother and father-a long-cherished ambition. My uncle needed the most



"One, Two, Three, Ready-Sing." of it to help pay the note. We drove to Potsdam on that sad errand and what a time we had getting there and back in deep mud and sand and jolting over corduroys!

"Bart," my uncle said the next evening, as I took down the book to read, "I guess we'd better talk things over a little tonight. These are hard times. If we can find anybody with money enough to buy 'em I dunno but we better sell the

"If you hadn't been a fool," my aunt exclaimed with a look of great distress-"ayes! if you hadn't been a fool."

"I'm just what I be, an' I ain't so big a fool that I need to be reminded of it," said my uncle.

"I'll stay home an' work," I proposed bravely.

"You ain't old enough for that," sighed Aunt Deel.

"I want to keep you in school," said Uncle Peabody, who sat making splint broom.

Benjamin Grimshaw—the rich man of the hills. He didn't stop to knock, but walked right in as if the house were his own. It was common gossip that he held a mortgage on every acre of the countryside. I had never liked him, for he was a stern-eyed man who was always scolding somebody, and I had not forgotten what his son had said of him.

"Good night!" he exclaimed curtly, as he sat down and set his cane between his feet and rested his hunds upon it. He spoke hoarsely and I remember the curious notion came to me that he looked like our old ram. He wore a thin, gray beard under his chin. His mouth was shut tight in a long line curving downward a lit-

tle at the ends. My uncle used to say that his mouth was made to keep his thoughts from leaking and going to waste. He had a big body, a big chin, a big mouth, a big nose and big ears and hands. His eyes lay small in this setting of bigness.

"Why, 'fr. Grimshaw, it's years since you've been in our houseaves!" said Aunt Deel

"I suppose it is," as converse rathr sharply. "I don't have much time o get around. I have to work. There's some people seem to be able to git along without it. I see you've got one o' these newfang ed stoves," he added as he looked it over. "Huh! Rich folks can have anything they

Uncle Peabody had sat splintering the long stick of yellow tirch, I observed that the jackknife trembled in his hand. His tone had a touch of unnaturalness, proceeding no doubt from his fear of the man before him, as he said:

"When I bought that stove I felt richer than I do now. I had almost enough to settle with you up to date, but I signed a note for a friend and had to pay it."

"Ayuh! I suppose so," Grimshaw answered in a tone of bitter irony which cut me like a knife-blade, young as I was. "What business have you signin' notes an' givin' away money which ain't yours to give-I'd like to know? What bus'zess have you actin' like a rich man when you can't pay yer honest debts? I'd like to know that, too?"

"If I've ever acted like a rich man it's been when I wa'n't lookin'," said

Uncle Peabody. "What business have you to go enlargin' yer family-takin' another mouth to feed and another body to spin for? That costs money. I want to tell you one thing, Baynes, you've got to pay up or git out o' here." He raised his cane and shook it in

the air as he spoke. "Oh, I ain't no doubt o' that," said Uncle Peabody. "You'll have to have yer money—that's sure; an' you will have if I live, every cent of it, This boy is goin' to be a great help to me-you don't know what a good boy he is and what a comfort he's

been to us!" These words of my beloved unel uncovered my emotions so that I put my elbow on the wood-box and leaned my head apon it and sobbed.

"I ain't goin' to be hard on ye Baynes," said Mr. Grimshaw as he rose from his chair; "I'll give ye my aunt had sixty dollars which she three months to see what you can do. had saved, little by little, by selling I wouldn't wonder if the boy would turn out all right. He's big an' cordy of his age and a purty likely boy, they

Mr. Grimshaw opened the door and stood for a moment looking at us and added in a milder tone: "You've got one o' the best farms in this town an' if ye work hard an' use common sense ye ought to be out o' debt in five years-mebbe less."

He closed the door and went away. Neither of us moved or spoke as we istened to his footsteps on the gravel path that went down to the road and to the sound of his buggy as he drove away. Then Uncle Peabody broke the silence by saying: "He's the dam'dest-"

He stopped, set the half-splintered stick aside, closed his jackknife and went to the water-pail to cool his emotions with a drink.

Aunt Deel took up the subject where he had dropped it, as if no-half-expressed sentiment would satisfy her,

"-old skinflint that ever lived in this world, ayes! I ain't goin' to hold my opinion o' that man no longer, ayes! I can't. It's too powerful—ayes!"

Having recovered my composure l repeated that I should like to give up school and stay at home and work. Aunt Dee! interrupted me by say.

"I have an idee that Sile Wright will heip us—ayes! He's comin' home an' you better go down an' see himayes! Hadn't ye?"

"Bart an' I'll go down to-morrer," said Uncle Peabody.

Some fourteen months before that day my uncle had taken me to Potsdam and traded grain and salts for what he called a "rip roarin' fine and o' clothes" with boots and cap and shirt and collar and necktie to match, I having earned them by sawing and cording wood at three shillings a cord. How often we looked back to those better days! The clothes had been too big for me and I had had to wait until my growth had taken up the "slack" in my coat and trousers before I could venture out of the neighborhood. I had tried them on every week or so for a long time. Now ing statute filled them handsomely and they filled me with a pride and saisfaction which I had never known

"Now may the Lord help ye to be careful—awful, terrible careful o While we were talking in walked them clothes every minute o' this day," Aunt Deel cautioned as she looked at me. "Don't git no hors sweat nor wagon grease on 'em."

> Barton gets new inspiration from the words of the great Silas Wright, who plans for the education of the boy when he is old enough to leave home for school.

## (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Our Wonderful Language. A certain merchant died, leaving to

his only son the conduct of his extersive business, and great doubt was expressed in some quarters whether the young man possessed the ability to car ry out the father's policies. "Well." said one kindly disposed friend, "for my part, I think Henry is very bright and capable. I'm sure he will succeed. "Perhaps you're right," said another friend. "Henry is undoubtedly a clev er feilow, but, take it from me, old man, he hasn't got the head to dil his father's shoes."





We are constrained to give many of and makes this a very spring-song of the dignified wraps for spring the in- a wrap. The long, narrow sash is definite title of "outer garment." They made of the material and folds over at are toga-like affairs which manage to the front. combine the convenience and warmth of coats with the grace and style of capes; part coat and part cape. De- new spring models of hats, according signers have employed a world of in- to the bulletin of the Retail Millinery genuity in making them, sometimes Association of America. These are joining a regulation cape to a short used in the same shade as the hat, in coat and sometimes merging two gar- natural shades or in a combination of ments into one, but always contriv- different shades. One very smart little ing to keep the suggestion of the of grapes dangling over the side brim. cape very much in evidence.

In the wrap shown it is the sleeve that turns the trick of converting a long coat into the semblance of a cape. This is the smartest of models, made of velours in marine blue, with is made with a bone ring on one end an ample dolman sleeve. A soft print- of the belt, and a bone pin on the other ed silk in the same color with white -that is, a dumb-bell-shaped piece of figures lines the whole garment and bone. This slides through the ring, makes an overlay on the wide shawl and when twisted around in position coller. It is glimpsed in the sleeves keeps the belt end from slipping.

Cherries on Spring Hats.

Cherries trim quite a number of the The facing and draped band of this model are of faille taffeta.

Bone Sweater Belt Fastenings.

One of the new sweater coats of silk

# To Take the Place of Petticoats



From top to toe, everything in ap- white and pink. Elastic bands hold parel is more or less influenced by them to the leg below the knees where the new and narrow skirt. Many they are finished with a narrow frill. of them are draped and some of them | As in other undermusins the materials are cut so that they hang in; that is, used for them are fight in weight, but they narrow about the ankles. Often durable. Very dainty petticoats of they are folded over, or slashed, at batiste, with lace rather sparingly used the bottom so that they allow a free for trimming them, are presented for stride but maintain their narrowness. wear with thin summer dresses, and Since their adoption even hats have the silk underslip is an essential item been modified to harmonize with the in the summer wardrobe. long lines of the new silhouette.

Under the new skirts there is no abundance of room for frilly silk petticoats, so pantalettes of satin have appeared to take their place. They are long and soft, with plaited frills at the bottom that almost reach the Instep. Where the frill is joined to the pantalette a casing is stitched with an elastic cord run in it, that holds the pantalette snugly to the leg. They are a better protection against dust than petticoats and the most sensible of garments for walking. What fullness is necessary is gathered in at the waistline over an elastic cord. The pantalettes are made in wash satins and in silk, and they are not always in light colors. Probably before France will launch victory colors, but summer arrives they may be bought in it is to be supposed that if she does. almost as great a variety of colors as she will use the horizon blue of the

The demand for bloomers is increas- French flag. She is not much given ing since the advent of narrow skirts, to this kind of work. It may be that and these are made in wash silks and she will not celebrate victory through eatins, and in batiste and sateen, in fabrics.

America's Victory Colors.

Those in America who choose the seasonal colors for the dyers and dressmakers, have united upon a rich. deep blue and a bright cherry as the victory colors for 1919. It is not the red that we associate with conqueror. observes a correspondent, it is too light and thin in its tones; but it will undoubtedly prove a success, as it is an excellent contrast to the victory blue. The choice of these colors is confined to America. We do not know that French uniform or the blue of the