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Adventures of Tad;

OR THE
HAPS AND MISHAPS OF A LOST SACHEL.

A Story for Young and Old.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE,
AUTHOR OF "PEPPER ADAMS," "BLOWN OUT
TO SEA," "PAUL GRAPTON," ETC.

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Miss Smith's house was a high, square-roofed building, sadly in need of painting, standing a little back from the road. It had one immense chimney at the very apex of the roof, and a low, old-fashioned piazza on the west front. Two great elm-trees bent protectively over it, an ornamental garden apple-trees was in the rear, the vegetable garden at one side, and a small yard in front, where the two boys entered the gate. Miss Smith herself was raking away the dead leaves from a bed of upspringing crocuses.

At her approach Miss Smith threw her sun-bonnet back, and, straightening up the rake-handle, stood stiffly erect, clasping it between her gloved hands—something like the manner of a sentinel with his musket when not on active duty—as she stared very hard at Tad, whose heart was beating furiously.

"So this is the boy," she said, in an uncompromising sort of voice—her remark seemingly addressed to herself—"humpf!"

This was by no means encouraging, and Tad's hopes went down below zero with considerable rapidity. Joe stood at one side, with a shadowy look of expectancy on his freckled face.

"How old are you, Tad?" suddenly shrieked Miss Smith, with such unexpected energy that mechanically Tad clapped his hands to his ears.

"Fourteen—in my fifteenth year!" shouted Tad, whose face became quite crimson through the exertion. So Joe's, but from a different cause.

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"No, marm," responded Joe, in a voice suggestive of the deepest contrition. Affecting to be overcome with remorseful sorrow, he applied a small red-bordered cotton handkerchief to his eyes, and sobbed hysterically, after which, twisting it between his fingers, he feigned to wring tears of bitter grief from his folds.

Turning her back upon the arch deceiver, Miss Smith proceeded to put Tad through a rapid course of questioning. Did he smoke or swear? Had he been vaccinated? Were his father and mother living? Had he been to school? What church did he attend?—and a few other queries, of similar import.

On all points except that of church-going Tad's answers were very satisfactory; and Miss Smith graciously admitted that his lack of clothes was a tolerably reasonable excuse for his deficiency in that one respect.

"I guess you'll do," she finally said, "at least I'm minded to try you, so you can come over and begin work early Monday morning."

"Thank you, marm," replied Tad, with a beaming face. "I'll be here early; and though I'm kind of green, Miss Smith," he added, earnestly, "I'll learn just as fast as ever I can, and work all the harder to make up."

"Well, we'll see," was the only reply. Miss Smith's faith in juvenile promises had been rudely shattered by the frequent breakages that she had known in her experience. At the same time she felt rather drawn toward this pale-faced orphaned boy—though she would not have owned it, even to her own self.

"Don't you let that Joe Whitney lead you into any mischief before you get back to Cap'n Flagg's," said Miss Smith, sharply, raising her voice for Joe's edification, as Tad joined him outside the gate.

"Now, Miss Smith," expostulated the injured youth, "that isn't fair!" The maiden lady smiled significantly, and, muttering something about "innocent Abigail," resumed raking, while Tad, exultant over his future prospects, forbore to reproach his mischievous companion for the little episode I have narrated, and the two walked away together in the most amicable manner.

It didn't hurt much of any, with this," added Joe, with a rather sickly smile, as he touched the small of his back significantly. "Only I've got to get a new piece of pasteboard—this is pretty high worn out."

"Are you coming, Joseph?" The voice was Deacon Whitney's, and sounded from the wood-shed close by. Tad fled ignominiously through the rear barn door, while Joe reluctantly obeyed the direful summons. Not that Deacon Whitney was unreasonably harsh or stern. Indeed, his wife said: "Joe's thrashin' hurt the deacon a dreadful sight more'n they did Joe."

The spruce-bushes parted suddenly, but instead of disclosing the form of a ferocious bear, nothing more formidable than the good-humored features of Joe Whitney, adorned with an expressive grin, was revealed. There were traces of recent tears on his freckled face; yet with beams from his eyes, and it was evident that the recent punishment had not had a very depressing effect on his animal spirits.

"Thought I was a bear, didn't you, Tad?" he remarked, laughing. And Tad, too much relieved at the prospect of companionship to feel very angry, answered with a feeble smile, that he was kind of started, and made haste to change the subject.

"I've got seven trout, but they're awful small," said Tad, producing his catch, with a rather disconsolate air. Joe started, whistled and then roared.

"Why, you goosie!" he shouted, but so good-naturedly that it was impossible to be angry with him. "Those ain't trout—they're chubs!"

"Oh, wouldn't I like to catch just one trout!" sighed Tad; and Joe stoutly assured him not to worry—he'd put him up to catching more than one—perhaps half a dozen—before they returned.

"Did it hurt you very much?" inquired Tad, presently, with delicate reference to the cause of his companion's lameness. "No, it didn't hurt me much," he said, with a great sigh of thankfulness. And though, as might be expected, Tad Thorne's religious knowledge was of the vaguest possible order, he somehow felt his heart going out thankfully to the Maker of such a beautiful world.

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so did the trout, and "snarp" went the end of the alder pole, leaving Tad in a mad frenzy of excitement, with three-fourths of the rod in his hands, dancing madly on the rocks.



For the broken fragment, which was floating in sight. Gathering the slack line carefully in his hands, a vigorous trout landed high and dry the largest trout ever caught in Mill brook.

"There!" Joe exclaimed, as Tad regarded his prize in an amazement too deep for words, "you've caught the one real trout you've wanted to—now, I guess we'd better be getting home, without doing any more fishing."

"All right," returned Tad, mournfully, "but you caught him, after all, Joe." But Joe stoutly asserted that Tad hooked him first, while he—Joe—only helped to bring the big fish safe to land. And in the discussion of the existing episode, the walk home was accomplished in a surprisingly short time.

Tad's big trout was baked for supper, and he was generally agreed by the four who partook thereof that the flavor was particularly fine. Tad himself secretly thought he had never eaten any thing so delicious as his whole life.

"You're to begin ship's duties to Miss Smith on Monday—eh, Tad?" remarked the Captain, thoughtfully, to break a little silence which had fallen upon the group.

"Yes, sir," was the reply, "and I do hope she'll like me."

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A JACK HORNERS LEGISLATURE.

To the Editor of the Chronicle (overseer), I have been watching the course of the fusionists in the Legislature with deep interest, and shall continue to do so. I do not condemn them for taking the appointments of committee out of the hands of Lieutenant Governor Doughton. I think they were justifiable in such a course, because they are in full power and are responsible for all the legislation that will be enacted. They were elected and it was intended by the people that they should have full sway and a fair trial.

But there is one series of actions for which they deserve the severest censure and reprobation. It is the disgraceful and sordid manner in which they have "stuffed the offices" at the State Capitol. If they have not stuffed the ballot boxes they certainly have stuffed the official places and pulp. It was said at the assembling of the Legislature that the swarm of office seekers was surpassing great and that the applicants outnumbered the members by many men. The facts bear out the assertion, for the investigation and figures afford abundant evidence.

The Senate is composed of 50 members, 45 of whom are fusionists. The Senate now has 15 clerks and assistants and one doorkeeper and assistant; each of these employees drawing \$5 a day. It has 16 "laborers" each drawing \$2.50 a day and 8 pages each drawing \$1 a day. So a Senate of 50 members has on its payroll a total of 41 clerks, laborers and pages; and the House a total of 64 similar employees. Such a showing at the threshold of the fusionist administration is startling in the extreme.

The last Legislature gave too much latitude in that respect, but the present Legislature has increased the pay rolls \$3,570! It is a truism that soldiers loathe pillage and sailors a divide but tell me not that "the soldiers of reform" have made such a conscientious raid upon the State Treasury as these "work and loafers" are doing until they sit upon the flowers and they are silent when sucking their fill.

Extravagance is a mild term for such conduct. Would these reformers be so reckless in their own affairs! Can the water be pure if the fountain is tainted? No member of the Legislature has the face to say there is a real need for more than one-third of this number of employees. Let these hangers-on and local township bosses or scavengers be sent home, and at least \$6,000 could be saved without detriment or inconvenience. It gives the colored brethren who are beginning to be awakened by education an honest effort at reform. Education is needed among the masses. "In a certain section of this portion of the State, at a meeting of an Alliance some questions had to be decided by ballot. Out of 24 members present, there were only three who could write the ballots for the others to cast, and thus conform to the requirements. Creating useless places for thriftless kin and rewarding party workers out of public taxes is an abuse and betrayal of a sacred trust. Deny it who will.

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